

# THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS



## Millennium Issue

AN Wilson • Clarissa Dickson Wright • Frank Keating  
 • Matthew Parris • Peter Ackroyd • Richard Cork  
 Simon Thurley • Suzy Menkes • Simon V

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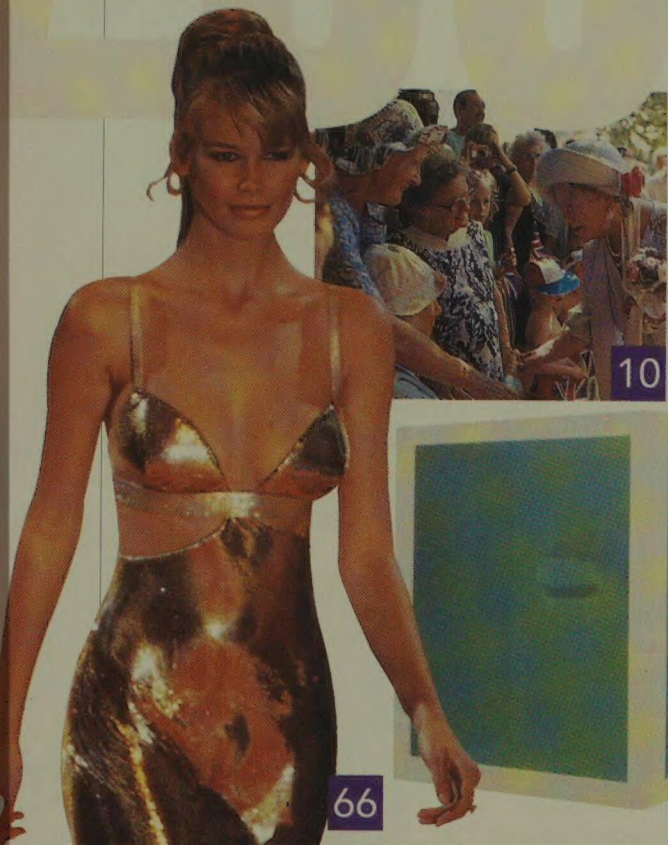
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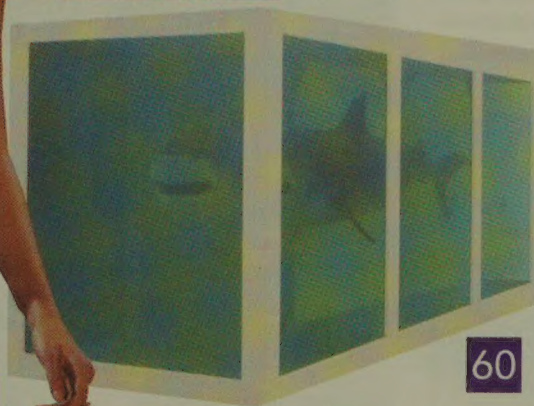
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Celebrating the Queen Mother as an icon of our century, left. Far left and below, cutting-edge fashion and modern art cause a stir. Bottom left, sampling food through the ages. Bottom right, Dr WG Grace, one of Britain's greatest sportsmen.

TIM GRAHAM

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Editor: Alison Booth Art Director: Adrian Hulf Managing Editor: Rosemary Duffy Chief Sub: Fiona Ferguson Sub-Editor: Suzanne Pavely Designer: Mark Brewster Listings Coordinator: Julia Pearey Picture Editor: Susan Rowbottom Picture Researcher: Sarah Carrington Circulation Manager: Richard Pitkin Group Production Manager: Pete Kraushaar Production Assistant: Katy Jordan Advertisement Director: Hilton Freund Group Advertisement Manager: Jane Washbourn Deputy Advertisement Manager: Suzanne Pfaff International Sales: Victoria Stringer, tel: 00 333 492 75 82 08 Publisher: Tony F Price Proprietor: James B Sherwood  
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# BARBADOS

Far beyond its sun-splashed beaches, the Caribbean island of Barbados and Elegant Resorts offer an exquisite experience of warm hospitality.

Far beyond its sun-splashed beaches, the Caribbean island of Barbados offers an exquisite experience of warm hospitality and exotic pleasures. Barbados has it all - a near perfect climate with year-round sunshine, clear blue sea, watersports, cricket, renowned international cuisine, and a fantastic range of accommodation.

The island is endowed with a rich heritage and many sites of historical, cultural and ecological interest. Explore the tropical gaves and a spectacular cave system; visit plantation houses such as St Nicholas Abbey and discover the charming and colourful chattel houses that are dotted across the landscape.

Take advantage of the Heritage Passport, an all-inclusive pass offering special access to National Trust attractions, celebrating the culture and wildlife of Barbados.

Barbados and Britain share in their national passion for sports. Legendary horseracing events such as Derby Day at the Garrison Savannah and the Sandy

Kensington Oval has made Barbados an international cricket capital hosting many world-class matches. Between September and March, skilled Polo players are attracted to tournaments held on the island.

A diverse range of festivals offers activities to suit everyone. Music festivals attract prominent names in jazz, opera and musical theatre. The Holder's Opera Season in



March performed in the spectacular gardens of Holder's House has featured Pavarotti accompanied by the London Philharmonic Orchestra and opera diva, Lesley Garrett. Crop Over in July, dating back to the 18th century, celebrates the end of the sugar cane harvest and invites dancing through the streets to the beat of calypso music. Crop Over has grown to become the highlight of the cultural calendar.

For indulgent relaxation, experience the island's beaches. The Platinum Caribbean coast on the west of the island boasts powder white sands and crystal blue seas with a host of watersports on offer. The island's east coast features rugged headlands and the Atlantic Ocean produces some of the world's finest waves for surfing.

For exciting nightlife visit the south of the island, where lively

clubs and bars, clubs and restaurants provide entertainment into the early hours.

Bridgetown, the capital of Barbados, is a haven for shopping. The local craft stalls are set among modern duty free shops.

A visit to Bridgetown is also an opportunity for sightseeing: charter a catamaran for day cruises, guided tours, deep sea fishing and exploration of the fantastic coral reefs.

The excellent reputation of Bajan cuisine is displayed in a variety of restaurants.

From local bars to exclusive resorts, fresh local ingredients and a variety of fish produce some of the finest dishes.

Stores and markets sell fruit such as papaya, coconut,

breadfruit and plantains and display fresh seafood including flying fish, the national speciality. Truly Bajan dishes combine these to offer an array of exotic flavours - a real taste of the Caribbean.

**Elegant Resorts' 2000** collection of exclusive hotel and villa resorts presents an exceptional, hand-picked portfolio of some of the finest properties throughout Barbados.

The Sandpiper is an exclusive and discreet hotel, excelling in all areas. Although committed to luxury and personal service its intimate size encourages a particularly warm and friendly atmosphere. Winding paths through lush gardens lead to individual rooms and suites then continue down to the wide expanse of coral sand beach. The hotel's restaurant ranks as

Right; Treasure Beach  
Far right; the elegant dining room overlooking the pool area at the Lemington Villa



Left; the pool at the discreet Sandpiper Hotel

one of the best on the island and presents award-winning dishes in a delightfully intimate setting.

Cobblers Cove is one of the Caribbean's best loved hotels, blending the charm and elegance of an English country house with the tropical beauty and character of Barbados. Ideal for those seeking rest and relaxation, it enjoys a secluded setting in St Peter on the island's northwest coast.

Those seeking the ultimate in tropical luxury should focus upon the Camelot and Colleen Suites, two of the finest hotel rooms anywhere in the Caribbean.

Stroll along the delightful Payne's Bay beach and cast a sideways glance at the little enclave that is Treasure Beach. The attractive pool area, manicured lawns and bouganvillea-draped rooms convey an atmosphere of exclusivity.



Above; the pool at Cobblers Cove Hotel

If you are seeking a more independent style of holiday Elegant Resorts also offers first-class villa accommodation. Renting a private villa provides you with all the freedom you desire, complemented by a host of benefits. For those who simply yearn to escape from the daily chores, dedicated villa staff attend to your every need and, if it is total rest and relaxation you seek, complete privacy is guaranteed.

**British Airways** can fly you in style to Barbados with a choice of premium travel classes and daily scheduled flights from London Gatwick.

For the jet setters amongst you, make it a really special trip with a supersonic flight on Concorde. Concorde's fabulous 4 hour supersonic flight to Barbados offers the discerning traveller attentive service whilst travelling at twice the speed of sound. Or why not try British Airways First and enjoy luxuries such as a choice of 5 courses from the à la carte menu, served at any time you wish, catching a film on your own personal video screen or have a blissful sleep on your seat, that at the touch of a button becomes a six foot six inch bed with a fine cotton pillow and soft duvet.

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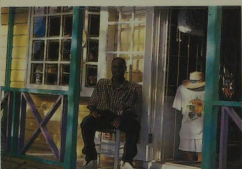
relax in your ergonomically designed tilting cradle seat and savour the delights of a gourmet four course meal and fine wines which will quickly get you in the holiday mood.

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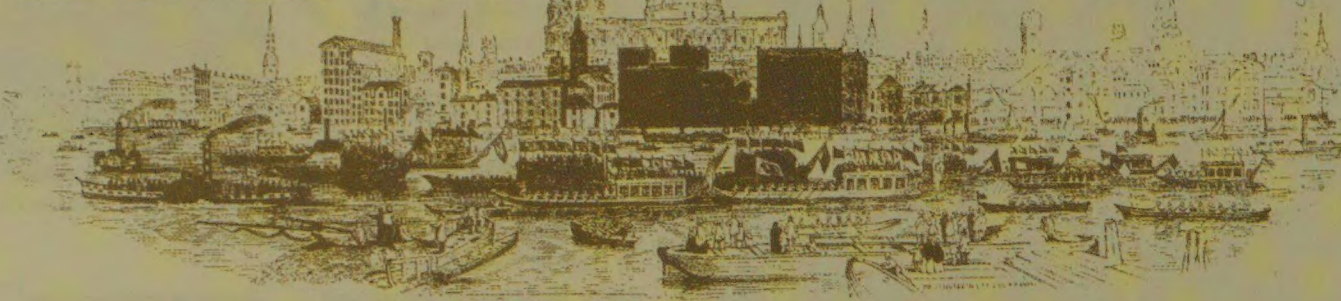


Above; Bridgetown a haven for shopping

Lane Gold Cup, draw race-lovers to Barbados from all over the world. The sound of leather on willow echoing through the



# THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS



The library of back issues of *The Illustrated London News* provides an unbroken record of the publication since its inception. Over the years, the journal absorbed several of its rivals, including the weekly *The Sketch*, whose back numbers the Library also holds. Leafing through these we discovered the following column under the heading "The New Century – What Will it Bring Us?" Tellingly, many of the issues raised in 1901 are identical to those being debated today. In some respects the writer is uncannily prescient, in others, sadly over-optimistic. He wonders how future generations will come to view their forebears. What, however, would he think of us?

## The New Century

Reprinted from "The Sketch", 1901

The bells have rung out the used-up century, and we stand on the threshold of a new great vista of history. We consider ourselves a thoroughly progressive generation, and smile a little, not unkindly, when we think of those dear, old-fashioned people, our great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers, who deemed a stage-coach a miracle of quick travelling, who went on the Grand Tour in their own carriages, who dined at afternoon-tea time, and looked on a visit to the theatre as a serious event in their lives; but what will our great-grandchildren, who listen to the chimes ringing out 2000 and ringing in 2001, think of us? Shall we seem to them to have lived as slowly as the men and women of 1800 seem to have done to us? Will our flying northern expresses, our electric trains in the bowels of the earth, our submarine boats and our air-ships, be as much out-dated and out-paced as "Puffing Billy" and the lumbering old East Indiamen of the early years of the last century now are? Shall we, in our stove-pipe silk hats, frock-coats, and turn-over collars, afford infinite merriment to the youngsters who look through the family photographic albums a century hence, always supposing that such things as albums exist then? What will the photograph be in 2001? The daguerreotype of half-a-century ago and the work of art which a photograph seems to us to-day are very wide apart in beauty. Will the improvement continue in the next hundred years, and what will the supreme expression of the art be in the twenty-first century?

We look to-day at the map of the world and



Festive toasts "then [1799] and now" published in the ILN Christmas Supplement of December 23, 1899.

note how in the past century the red border that denotes British dominion has crept round many lands in many seas, and how the young giants, our Colonies, have dotted their shores with towns, seamed their plains with railways and pitted them with mines. How will that great yellow patch which is China be coloured a century hence? Where will the boundaries of India be traced? What new cities will blacken the blank spaces of the maps of Australia and South Africa?

The great army of physicians has fought well during the past century. Lives have been given as fearlessly as they are on the battlefield in the struggle with disease, and some of the terrors that attend the vanguard of Azrael have vanished. Rabies is no longer the certain road to death following a mad dog's bite, and small-pox has been robbed of most of its fierceness. Our great-grandchildren will talk of the plague and cholera and enteric and malaria as scourges that have vanished before the science of medicine.

When our great-grandchildren tell their sons and daughters that London was at one time covered with wires like a spider's web, and that

telegraphic and telephonic communication was interrupted by gales or a heavy snow, the young people will think that their parents exaggerate; and that the traffic of the greatest city in the world was disorganised at frequent intervals by the roads being torn up will be ascribed to the inventive genius of the men who wrote for the comic papers at the beginning of the 20th century.

What will our Army be in 2001? It is instructive to read Napier and Lever and contrast their writings with those of Lord Roberts and Kipling. The three-bottle man, who was never expected to be sober after two in the afternoon, has absolutely vanished from the officers' mess, and "bloody wars and quick promotion" is no longer the favourite toast. The lash has gone, the canteen has been superseded by the regimental institute, the soldier is treated as a respectable member of society, and the greatest British Commander of the day has written of him that he is a hero and a gentleman. The century that has passed has seen the de-brutalising of the British Army. The century that is with us will bring the higher education in practical soldiering.



# Three Cheers to the Millennium

**T**he arrival of a new millennium is such a milestone that a magazine with a history as long as that of *The Illustrated London News* could hardly fail to mark it. The world's first illustrated journal, in continuous publication since 1842, is therefore pleased to present this special Millennium Issue—a look back to the era when the *ILN* first appeared, then moving forward through the intervening years. Our eminent writers explore the past to provide a new slant on the present and to anticipate the future. The magazine

also includes a London guide to all the new developments and events planned for 2000 in what, for the past century-and-a-half, has always been one of the world's most exciting cities.

If compiling this issue of the *ILN* has taught us anything it is that the birth of the journal was no arbitrary event—it was part of a period of unusually swift change and development. Pundits of today would have us believe that we are living life in the fast lane, coping with huge technological and social upheaval. But a look back to the 1840s shows that many of the fields in which we now consider ourselves highly sophisticated—transport, communications and medicine, for instance—first entered what could be considered the modern era in and around that period. After centuries of comparatively gentle development, the early Victorians were swamped with change and innovation. It is no surprise that a revolutionary publication such as the *ILN* should appear at this time and take the market by storm—achieving a circulation which rose from an immediate 26,000 to 200,000 in just 10 years. The publication spawned dozens of imitators both within Britain and worldwide, from America to China.

Over the years, the *ILN* has accumulated a vast Picture Library—its unique collection of engravings, photographs and illustrations of life and

events from 1842 to the present. Our Millennium Issue has provided a great opportunity to explore afresh this treasure trove of images. Also in this special issue of the magazine, our article on modern art by critic Richard Cork is a reminder that the *ILN* has attracted some of the day's leading artists, especially in the pre-photography days when we used wood-block engravings. Sadly, some artists, such as Van Gogh, were never to achieve their ambition of working for the publication and, in 1873, when Edgar Degas submitted a drawing of a ballet rehearsal it was rejected as being "unsuitable for our rectory circulation".

Other articles make the point that *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*. Tom Standage debunks the modern mythology surrounding the Internet, showing that it is merely the offspring of its far more innovative precursor, the telegraph. On a lighter note, Matthew Parris investigates the changing attitudes of the press to scandal—a subject that has never failed to boost reader numbers. Other articles celebrate the personalities who have given Britain its fizz—Frank Keating's sporting legends, for instance, and Peter Ackroyd's personal selection of the historical figures who have most made their mark on modern London. And, fittingly for a publication long known for its in-depth coverage of royalty, our first feature is devoted to the nation's best-loved nonagenarian, The Queen Mother, whose life mirrors that of the 20th century.

So how did the *ILN* mark the turn of the last century? Considering the hype that attends the arrival of 2000, it may at first seem surprising that the last issues of the *ILN* in 1899 and 1900 barely mentioned the arrival of the 20th century. More than 50 years of comparative peace have now provided Britons with the leisure to contemplate their place in the world. The late Victorians had no such luxury: the pages of the *ILN* at the turn of the last century were dominated by news of the Boer War. Indeed it was for its coverage of wars that the publication truly made its mark, begun by appointing five illustrators to detail the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 and its reputation cemented in 1914 when it became the first publication to send correspondents and artists to the Flanders fields.

However, the *ILN* Christmas Supplement of 1899 permitted itself a little levity by presenting a series of "then and now" illustrations, including those pictured on the page opposite. One of a series of pairs depicting celebrations in 1799 and 1899, we bring them up to date with our own image, above—a colour photograph, of course—of how Britons today might ring in the new year, century and millennium.

Join us in raising  
our glasses to  
three turns of the  
century and  
the millennium  
to come.







# Queen of the Century

As the millennium draws to a close, Alan Hamilton pays tribute to a royal whose own 99 years have kept pace with the century, winning her a lasting place in the hearts of the British people.

The only public criticism in living memory to be levelled at Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother came from the late Diana, Princess of Wales. It was a revealing disclosure, for it showed the two women to be diametric opposites. In *Diana: Her True Story*, the Princess admitted that she maintained "a distrustful distance" from her grandmother-in-law. She believed the Queen Mother exercised a far greater degree of influence over the Prince of Wales than was healthy for their marriage. Diana came to regard Clarence House, the Queen Mother's residence, as the fount of all negative comment about her. Given that Diana's grandmother the late Ruth, Lady Fermoy, was one of the Queen Mother's oldest and closest friends, the princess' suspicion was in some ways a surprise. But to those who knew the two women even slightly, it was inevitable.

Diana had her flaws, but she represented the future. She chose unfashionable charities to patronise and moved among the sick, dying and dispossessed with consummate, and genuine, ease. Queen Elizabeth, born to immutable standards of duty and the highest Victorian family values, represented the past.

From the early age of seven, above, to her 99th birthday, right, the Queen Mother has rarely been seen without her trademark pearls.



## A LIFETIME OF ROYALTY

Glimpses of Britain's royal family since the birth of the Queen Mother in 1900.

### 1901

In January, Queen Victoria, who graced the throne for nearly 64 years of great change, dies aged 81 surrounded by her children and grandchildren.



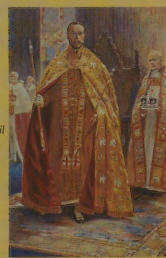
### 1902



Edward VII is crowned, just seven weeks after being struck down with appendicitis.

### 1911

Wearing the magnificent coronation robes, King George V is anointed with consecrated oil and crowned King of Great Britain and Ireland in a ceremony enriched by a thousand years of history.







She has always believed that a queen, even one 47 years retired, should conduct herself with utmost dignity and decorum, and should, in return, expect unquestioning respect.

Respect and, indeed, affection are what she almost universally commands from her public. She is not only above the criticism that gnaws at her family, she appears beyond the reach of the politicians and hard-nosed accountants who have slimmed down and tightened up her daughter's monarchy in recent years. How does she do it? There must be more to her subjects' admiration than mere amazement at her longevity.

There is, of course, a sense of gratitude for duty done. In the darkest years of the country's recent history, she bolstered her shy and stammering husband to the extent that recent reassessments of the reign of George VI now regard him as one of our most underrated monarchs. As a wartime Queen Consort, she created a hugely favourable impression. Implored by a nervous government to send Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret to the safety of Canada, she replied sharply that they would not leave without their mother, she would not leave without the King, and the King would never leave. It was an enormous boost to national morale.

She was cannily artful in her countless visits to war-damaged communities. The King always wore uniform, but she never did; she tried to identify with civilians, especially women left at home to suffer bombs, rationing and anxiety over a husband or son on active service. If Churchill was leader of the war, Elizabeth was the figurehead of the Home Front.

But national duty distantly done does not in itself entirely explain her appeal. A greater part of the answer must lie in her legendary and unfailing charm; Elizabeth is nothing if not a great and natural actress who handles her public in a way that puts most Hollywood queens to shame. From the moment she entered public life on her marriage in 1923, she exhibited an informality of style, inventing the walkabout and demonstrating that a royal visit need not adhere rigidly to predetermined tramlines. The public took to her at once, if only because she provided such a contrast to the starchy demeanour of King George V and Queen Mary.

She has maintained that decorous and easy style ever since and her secret is that she never appears bored. She engages people as though, at

that moment, they were the only person in the whole world who mattered. And there is probably no other person alive who can plant the five-thousandth tree of a lifetime and still give the impression that she has just found a new and highly entertaining way to pass an afternoon.

She can achieve that only if she genuinely enjoys what she is doing. There is no doubt that she does: adulation is the oxygen of her existence; her public her *raison d'être*. She will happily spend well over an hour on her feet chatting to war veterans at the annual remembrance ceremony, which is far more than anyone would reasonably expect from a woman who has had two artificial hip operations and is approaching her century.

During a decade in which the Royal Family has endured a rising tide of criticism from press and politicians for their dysfunctional domestic behaviour, and for giving allegedly poor value for money, the Queen Mother has escaped entirely unscathed. Even reports that she had run up a £4 million overdraft at her bank were greeted more with annoyance towards her advisers, rather than her.

On her 80th birthday, William Hamilton, an MP who built an entire parliamentary career on lambasting the Royal Family for being an utter waste of money, was obliged to pay a most uncharacteristic tribute to one of their number: "My hatchet is buried, my venom dissipated. I am glad to salute a remarkable old lady. Long may she live to be the pride of her family. And may God understand and forgive me if I have been ensnared and corrupted, if only briefly, by this superb royal trouper."

In recent years her daughter, the Queen, has been obliged, under public pressure, to start paying income tax, end the public subsidy to all but the most immediate members of her family, and fund the £40 million restoration of Windsor Castle herself by opening Buckingham Palace to tourists. But no such strictures have applied to the Queen Mother.

No one has seriously challenged her right to the £643,000 she gets from the civil list with which she maintains a grand lifestyle and her own court at Clarence House. She keeps a full-time staff of up to 40, which includes several secretaries, numerous maids and pages, two chefs and three chauffeurs. Despite her great age, she had some 55 official engagements last year, considerably more than her daughter Princess Margaret, who





1913  
King George V, wearing the uniform of a German army officer, meets Kaiser Wilhelm II as he inspects his regiment, the 1st Dragoons of the Guards, in Berlin.



Personal records: far left, on her wedding to the Duke of York, 1923. Left, wearing the Star of the Garter in a portrait painted by John St Helier Lander, after her coronation. Above, informally celebrating 25 years of marriage at Buckingham Palace.

1936  
George VI accedes to the throne on the abdication of his brother, Edward VIII, pictured left in fancy dress. The coronation of George takes place in 1937.

has largely retreated from public life. The Queen Mother adheres to the old Victorian adage that work is the rent you pay for your place on earth.

The secret of longevity lies in the genes as much as anywhere, but the Queen Mother amply demonstrates another essential—maintaining an interest in life. Although age has claimed many of her close friends, like Ruth Fermoy, and her own years now rule out former passions like fly-fishing, she is surrounded by an ever-growing family, and is now a great-grandmother nine times over.

Her devotion to National Hunt horse-racing remains undimmed and she is still a regular visitor to the paddock at major race meetings. She is a much more successful owner than her daughter—a matter of some internal family rivalry—but no winner's trophy was sweeter than the one delivered to her hospital bedside as she recovered from her second hip replacement operation at the age of 97. She is one of the oldest patients ever to receive a new hip, a tribute to her physical toughness. She set another record for age on June 12, 1998, when she overtook the late Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, to become the longest-living member of the Royal Family in history at 97 years and 312 days.

That she continues to enjoy life is patently obvious, if only from her legendary unwillingness to go to bed, however late the hour, if she is enjoying herself surrounded by good company. A state banquet for Emperor Akihito of Japan at Buckingham Palace last year overran by an hour because the Queen Mother was so reluctant to go home.

She still voyages round her various homes, with her domestic staff in tow. Weekdays are spent at Clarence House, weekends at Royal Lodge, Windsor, one of her favourite residences while her husband was alive. Her schedule includes Christmas at Sandringham and regular Scottish holidays, dividing her time between Birkhall, her house on the Balmoral estate, and Castle of Mey, set on the extreme north coast of Scotland where she runs a successful breeding herd of Aberdeen-Angus cattle.

It is, however, her pivotal role in her own family that lies at the centre of her life, and she remains a considerable—some would say excessive—influence on her daughter. As a child of the Victorian age she is an absolute traditionalist; she herself, as Queen Consort, did a great deal



1940  
During World War II, George VI and the Queen make countless visits to boost morale among the bombed communities of London's East End.





to restore confidence in a throne that had been undermined by the wayward Edward VIII. As a result she has opposed many of the changes the Queen and her advisers have felt necessary to modernise the monarchy. She is said to have been especially horrified at her daughter's decision to pay income tax, given that her own husband negotiated exemption from it in 1937 in return for removing from the government the burden of having to maintain his exiled elder brother.

The Duke of Edinburgh, the Royal Family's leading moderniser, has often been at odds with his mother-in-law, and future historians may well judge that without her potent voice in family councils the monarchy might well have been more willing to adapt to the late-20th century rather than always having to be pushed. But the other side of the same coin is the stability she has provided during a period of exceptional family disruption. With the divorces of the Princess Royal, the Duke of York and the Prince of Wales following hard one upon the other, the death of the Princess of Wales, and other lesser tragedies, the Queen Mother has at times been the glue that has continued to bind the family together.

She is a survivor from another age, our last "Eminent Victorian", born to the age of the telegram and still living to see the Internet. She was the last Empress of India, and has lived to see the complete dissolution of British imperial power from one-quarter of the globe to little more than Bermuda and Gibraltar. She was 17 at the time of the Bolshevik revolution and has lived through the rise and fall of the Soviet empire, too.

At the time of Elizabeth's birth, Victoria was closeted at Osborne in the 81st and last year of her life, and the 64th of her reign. Tsar Nicholas II reigned in St Petersburg, Kaiser Wilhelm II in Berlin, Emperor Franz Joseph in Vienna, William McKinley held power in the White House and Lord Salisbury in Downing Street.

She may be apolitical, but her world view is Empire High Tory; she used particularly to enjoy visiting black African colonies and sided strongly, if privately, with Ian Smith when he declared illegal white supremacist independence for what was still called Southern Rhodesia. The world has moved on and, to some extent, she has been left behind.

But that is not entirely a bad thing. Hereditary monarchy, to survive, must constantly re-invent itself. Elizabeth, in her 16 years as Queen Consort, made an enormous contribution to adapting the institution to the times it was living through. She should take heart from the fact that the younger generation of her family are re-inventing it again. For herself, she passed it on in a better state than she found it.

**ALAN HAMILTON** is Royal Correspondent of The Times. His latest book is *The Times Book of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother* which includes more than 200 pictures from the paper's archives (Times Books/HarperCollins, £16.99).



## 1952

Elizabeth II, Queen Mary and the Queen Mother at King George VI's funeral. Princess Elizabeth with her godchild, right. The investiture of Prince Charles in 1969, below.



## 1969

Above, indulging her passion for horse racing, with the late Princess Diana at the Derby.

Although Diana's grandmother, Ruth, Lady Fermoy, had been one of the Queen Mother's closest friends, opposing views on the nature of duty and the monarchy inevitably led to conflict between the princess and the Queen Mother.



## 1981

Prince Charles marries Lady Diana Spencer in a fairy-tale wedding at St Paul's cathedral. The shy princess is soon to become the nation's idol.

## 1999

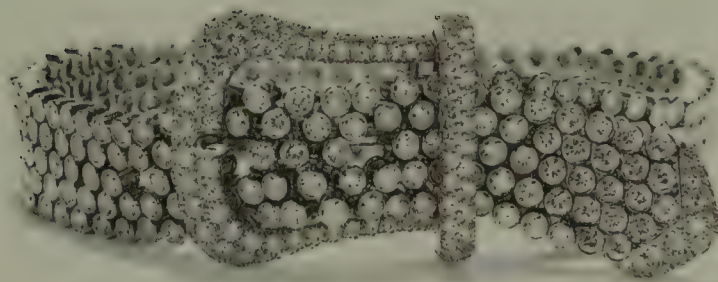
Sophie Rhys-Jones marries Prince Edward at Windsor. The Queen Mother, at 99, with her daughters Elizabeth and Margaret.







FROM THE HEART. *Buckle mesh bracelet of diamonds set in platinum.*



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# London on Show—Once Again

The Millennium Experience at Greenwich will be London's third major national exhibition in 150 years. The events of 1851 and 1951 were hugely successful—how, asks Alastair Irvine, will the Dome measure up?

The eyes of the world, millions upon millions of them, will turn towards Greenwich on New Year's Eve when, shortly before midnight, the Queen opens the Millennium Dome, unveiling the Millennium Experience within. This symbolic occasion will mark the start of 12 months of national celebrations during the year 2000. It will also be the culmination of five years of planning and construction, argument and controversy.

An estimated 12 million visitors will travel to the Dome in the coming year as Britain seeks to demonstrate that its flair for design, organisation and innovation is alive and kicking under the roof of this giant umbrella, as Dome-architect Lord Richard Rogers describes it, in Greenwich—the Home of Time. And time will tell soon enough whether Britain retains its genius for mounting an exhibition on such a grandiose scale.

The Millennium Experience will be the third major national exhibition to be held in the capital

during the past 150 years, following in the footsteps of the highly successful Great Exhibition of 1851, and the Festival of Britain in 1951. There are certainly many parallels between all three. The decisions to stage them, the designs for the buildings to house them, their cost, potential impact, aims and content have many common characteristics. The 1851 and 1951 events overcame all the numerous obstacles placed in their path to win widespread acclaim and public support. Whether the Dome can do the same remains to be seen.

The blueprint for such major national occasions was The Great Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations—the official title of the 1851 event—which was promoted by Queen Victoria's husband, Prince Albert, President of the Royal Society of Arts, as a showcase to display British innovation and talent. A competition to design a striking structure capable of housing the exhibition attracted 245 ideas, all of which were rejected by the organising committee. With time running

out, a design by Joseph Paxton, originally drawn on a piece of blotting paper, was published in the *Illustrated London News* and impressed the organisers enough to be selected.

Paxton was an extraordinary character who sought inspiration from his time as head gardener at Chatsworth House, the home of the Duke of Devonshire, where he had constructed the world's largest greenhouse. His new, giant glass and steel structure, dubbed the Crystal Palace, was originally erected in Hyde Park but later dismantled and moved to Sydenham in south London. Queen Victoria opened the exhibition on May 1, 1851 in front of 30,000 invited guests, with one million more people in the park outside. Like the Greenwich Dome, which some commentators have condemned as "yesterday's architecture" the Crystal Palace attracted criticism. Ruskin dismissed it as "a cucumber frame between two chimneys".

The Hyde Park Palace contained 293,655 panes of glass, 4,500 tons of ironwork and was 1,848ft

The 1951 Dome of Discovery on the South Bank was, with a 365ft diameter, the largest ever constructed: it has been significantly eclipsed by the Millennium Dome at Greenwich. Above left.



long and 408ft wide. Containing 100,000 exhibits —half from Britain, the rest from overseas—the exhibition attracted six million visitors before it was closed by Prince Albert in October, 1851. However, Paxton, was determined that his building would not simply be destroyed.

So, forming the Crystal Palace Company, he soon sold enough shares to raise the money to dismantle the structure and re-erect it on a 200-acre site at Sydenham Heights in south London where it overlooked the capital, Kent and Surrey. One rail line already ran past the site, another was laid to take trains into the grounds. The now-enlarged People's Palace, as it affectionately became known, was re-opened by Queen Victoria on June 10, 1854, and for the next 30 years this Victorian

fantasyland—divided into a series of courts and with its enormous permanent exhibition—attracted more than two million people annually. Although its popularity waned in the 20th century, the annual attendance was still nearly one million. Then, on the evening of November 30, 1936, disaster struck. It was rapidly engulfed in flames from a fire which was believed to have started in a staff lavatory. Within five hours the palace was just a pile of twisted iron girders and melted glass.

News of the fire spread almost as quickly as the flames. Huge crowds rushed to watch the Crystal Palace in its death throes and surrounding roads were blocked by thousands of sightseers who hampered the efforts of fire-fighters from across London attempting to reach the inferno. As 750 policemen tried to control the crowds, nearly 500 fire-fighters and 90 engines fought the blaze, to no avail. Sadly, the Crystal Palace and its contents were grossly under-insured. Lloyds paid out just £120,000 a week later, making any thought of reconstruction impossible.

By contrast, the 1951 Festival of Britain was conceived as an official celebration of recovery from World War II and to mark the centenary of the 1851 exhibition. Initial proposals to emulate the Victorian event by holding another great international trade exhibition were shelved on grounds of cost. Instead, the post-war Labour Government settled for a purely British trade fair, despite the still hefty price tag of £11 million.

The project's driving force was Lord President of the Council, Herbert Morrison, MP—the

grandfather of one-time "Dome Secretary" and former Trade & Industry Secretary Peter Mandelson—who succeeded in changing the emphasis from a sombre exhibition dedicated to promoting trade to include also, as he put it, "something jolly". The Festival was inaugurated by King George VI on May 2, 1951, and ran for five months during which time eight million people visited the main attractions in London—the South Bank Exhibition and the Festival Pleasure Gardens at Battersea.

The Festival might have been held at either the Olympia or Earls Court exhibition centres had both not been booked that summer, or even Battersea. Instead it was decided to house the main exhibition on the South Bank of the Thames, between County Hall and Waterloo Bridge, an area still suffering from the ravages of German wartime bombing raids.

There Sir Hugh Casson and his fellow architects created a miniature wonderland on a site of just 27 acres, with a series of pavilions and displays unfolding the story of Britain and its people, and their role in exploration and discovery. It even had its own dome—The Dome of Discovery—which, perched on slender stilts, was, with a 365ft diameter, the largest then ever constructed.

Among the 1951 festival's other landmarks was the 300ft-high Skyline, an aluminium and steel construction which, from a distance, appeared to hang in mid-air. An 1851 Centenary Pavilion contained an exact model replica of the Crystal Palace. Two-and-a-half miles away, in



Unlike the 1851 and 1951 events, the Dome will remain as a lasting architectural legacy, although its future use is currently undecided

The Crystal Palace, above right, was moved from its original site in Hyde Park to south London where it housed an enormous permanent exhibition, right. The Millennium Dome, left, is not intended to be a trade fair, but rather an exhibition with the emphasis on educational displays and entertainment, below.



Battersea, were the Festival Pleasure Gardens where visitors could watch fireworks displays, take trips on the Far Tottering and Oyster Creek Railway and Mississippi Showboat or enjoy themselves in a six-acre amusement park.

The Festival spirit was spread around the nation through regional and travelling exhibitions and every town and village encouraged to arrange their own festivities. The Millennium Commission determined to ensure the same will happen in 2000 by making cash awards available for millennium events and projects.

The 1951 festival offered the post-war generation the chance to shake off the bad memories of war and escape the worries of humdrum, everyday life. Although London was then full of dance halls, people flocked to the Fairway of the South Bank to dance the night away, even in the rain which plagued that summer. In the autumn they danced in their overcoats.

The Festival ended on September 29, 1951. The next month the Conservatives led by Sir Winston Churchill, never a festival supporter, defeated Labour in a general election. Apart from the Royal Festival Hall, planned from the start as a permanent structure, the Dome of Discovery, the Skyline and everything else was demolished.

The decision to hold the country's third major national exhibition to celebrate the arrival of 2000 was taken in 1995 by the then newly-formed Millennium Commission, which said it would enable: "The people of the United Kingdom and their visitors to have fun at this event, and to discover the achievements, abilities and potential of the nation at the start of the 21st century." No mention then of a trade fair, although the recruitment of corporate sponsors such as BT, Ford, British Airways

and McDonald's—each contributing £12 million—has provoked accusations of commercial overkill.

The highly-contaminated Greenwich Peninsula, formerly one of the country's biggest gas works, was picked as the exhibition site because of its size, regeneration potential and proximity to the Meridian Line and Greenwich, with its historical association with time. The £758 million project, like its two predecessors, also promises to overcome the political argument, public antipathy and press hostility which have plagued it over the past four years. The Government has insisted the 15 zones in the Dome all contain a strong educational emphasis, presented through the latest interactive displays to make the exhibits as appealing as possible to the widest possible age span.

As well as focal points such as the giant statue of a reclining couple in the Body Zone, the Dome will feature innovations such as energy-efficient toilets and wash-basins, water-recycling schemes, and driverless buses to transport visitors. But, unlike the 1851 and 1951 events (apart from the Royal Festival Hall) the Dome will remain on the Peninsula as a lasting architectural legacy, although its future use is currently undecided.

In terms of content, design and appeal all three events will ultimately be remembered as products of their age, yet retain a common theme—to satisfy visitors' demands to be entertained, impressed and educated, and to enjoy a memorable day out. The first two succeeded and there is every indication the Dome finally will too.

**ALASTAIR IRVINE** is the author of *The Battle for the Millennium Dome*, currently on sale in bookshops at £9.99, or by ordering direct from the Irvine News Agency, telephone 0181-319 0368.



# They read it here FIRST

Astonishing, quirky or simply hot news—these images from the late-19th and early 20th centuries reflect the lives of former readers of *The Illustrated London News*.

## ▲ A moving experience

The escalator, invented by Jesse W Reno of New York in 1894, provided transportation for passengers riding on cleats attached to a moving belt. The design proved to be rather dangerous, but the idea was improved upon, and the moving stairway was invented. In 1899 Charles Seeberger coined the name escalator for this new design and the first Seeberger "escalator" for public use was displayed at the 1900 Paris Exposition.

The first Reno Inclined Elevator in Britain was installed at Harrods, London, 1898—it could carry up to 1,000 passengers an hour, and an attendant stood at the top handing out free brandy or sal volatile to those who found the whole experience too much. For the hoi polloi who could not afford to shop at Harrods, another Reno elevator was constructed at Crystal Palace, Sydenham, the following year, which carried fare-paying passengers for a penny a go.

In 1911, Earls Court was the first underground station to install escalators (left). Unsure that the public would take to it, the transport authorities hired "Bumper" Harris, a man with a wooden leg, to ride up and down all day to show just how easy it was to use. Most people loved the escalator. *The Illustrated London News* noted: "Passengers on the way to the City have been seen to leave a train, go up with the stairs and down with the stairs—and catch the next train."



## ► The mail flies through the air with the greatest of ease

The United Kingdom's first air-mail service took wing in 1911 with a 20-mile, 10-minute hop skirting north-west London from Hendon to Windsor. The flight, celebrating the coronation of King George V a few weeks earlier, was a test run for transporting mail over longer distances in the future. The pilot, Mr Hamel, carried 10,000 pre-stamped cards and envelopes, all postmarked "First United Kingdom Aerial Post". Although he flew a Blériot monoplane, the postcard, costing six-and-a-half pence, showed a biplane over Windsor Castle. Letters cost 1/1d and all profits went to charity.



## ▼ Makes your hair curl

Back in 1870, Lenthéric of France could see the future of hairdressing for women, and it was a lot of hot air. No longer were curling irons needed to conjure beautiful waves from straight hair, drying it with hot air did the trick instead. But this technique did not produce permanent curls, so in 1906, Karl Nessler, a German hairdresser, demonstrated his solution to the problem—the permanent waving machine. It was, however, very cumbersome, the curling process took around six hours and it was very expensive.

It was not until the 1920s that Parisian hair-stylist Rambaud combined the techniques of the permanent wave and the set. The hot-air permanent on its own had produced tight little curls, which, although they did not uncurl, were not particularly attractive. Rambaud's new technique resulted in softly waving hair.

The Hairdressers' Annual Exhibition at London's White City in 1928 demonstrated the new-fangled machines (see below).

A brainwave indeed, they were described as "helmets in beauty's armoury".



## ▲ Mind the gap: the Underground railway opens

The world's first underground railway was the Metropolitan Railway's line which opened in London on January 10, 1863. The initial section, almost four miles long, ran between Paddington and Farringdon Street, with seven stops en route. Pictured above is Portland Road station, today known as Great Portland Street. The trains, powered by steam traction, ran along tunnels constructed using the "cut and cover" method which involved digging a deep trench with brick sides, which were given a girder or brick arch roof and then covered over.

The oldest section of today's Underground in fact predates the Metropolitan Railway by 20 years. The Thames Tunnel between Wapping and Rotherhithe, built by Sir Marc Brunel and his famous son Isambard, now carries the East London line under the Thames. Although it was designed for horse-drawn traffic, it opened in 1843 for pedestrians only and became a railway tunnel in 1869.

Today, the world's largest system, in terms of numbers of stations, is the New York subway, with almost 500. London, by comparison, has just under 300, but covers a slightly greater distance.

## ◀ From Pillar to Post

The first cast-iron pillar boxes, already in use in Belgium and France by 1850, arrived in the Channel Islands in 1852 and made their way to the mainland a year later. The first was positioned in Carlisle, followed by six in London in 1855, like this one on the corner of Fleet Street and Farringdon Street. Originally painted green, they did not acquire their distinctive red colour until the mid-1870s.





### ▼ Look, no hands: a driverless mail train

Mail delivery speeded up on February 20, 1863, with the introduction of the first driverless train carrying letters and parcels through an underground pneumatic tube. Thirty-five mail bags were loaded by 9.47am whereupon, reported the *ILN*, "The long chamber was then exhausted, and the train containing the first mails ever dispatched by the agency of the atmosphere were blown through the tube." The train took just one minute to get from London's Euston Station to a post office one-third of a mile away.



### ► Help the aged

People aged 70 or more, with an annual income of less than £21, were entitled to draw a weekly pension of 5/- (25p) from January 1, 1909. A woman in Walworth was so grateful to the post office clerk who helped her fill in her form that she gave him two rashers of bacon. A 75-year-old farmhand in Bishop's Stortford died as he signed the receipt.

Not everyone thought it a good thing. The Lord Provost of Glasgow denounced old-age pensions, claiming they would encourage the thriftless, and dissipate the proud spirit of Scottish independence.

### ▼ Speaking up

Thomas Edison's invention of the tinfoil phonograph in 1877 brought him worldwide fame, but his machine produced poor sound quality. He soon abandoned the project and left others to perfect it. By 1906, the Gramophone & Typewriter company of London boasted that opera stars Enrico Caruso and Nellie Melba were "singing and playing to delighted audiences in every corner of the Globe, thanks to the Gramophone". Melba herself praised "the wonderful reproductions of my singing".

One of the by-products of this exciting new technology was the first loudspeaker—the Autotophone, which could "make a gramophone sound as loud as a full brass band in the open air".

It was first used publicly at the 1900 Paris Exposition to broadcast recordings of operatic arias from the top of the Eiffel Tower. According to contemporary accounts, they could be heard all over Paris.



### ► Batty for Ping-Pong

Table tennis became all the rage in turn-of-the-century Britain after its invention in 1889 by a Croydon engineer, James Gibb, a distinguished, long-distance runner and one of the founders of the Amateur Athletics Association. After its beginnings as a wet-weather indoor game in the Gibb household, where it was played on the dining-room table using cigar box lids as bats and champagne corks as balls, its inventor could see the commercial possibilities.

Gibb experimented with rubber balls before hitting upon the idea of hollow celluloid balls, after visiting America. Sales of Gossima, as he called it, were slow at first when the game went on sale at Hamley Brothers in Regent Street in 1898.

It quickly became a success, however, when he changed the name to Ping-Pong, and soon the new craze swept not only Britain but other countries as well, notably the USA.

### ▲ The Chelsea fire balls

Explosions heard in London's Chelsea during the summer months of 1855 were probably caused by a certain Captain Disney experimenting with new weaponry for the British Army. One was a hand grenade which, according to the *ILN*, was "a reproduction of the celebrated Greek fire, by which materials the most difficult to ignite under ordinary circumstances are readily consumed". Another device was a shell designed to cause temporary blindness. It was said to leave an irritation in the nostrils similar to "effects produced by Lundy Foot snuff".



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# Curtain up on a new millennium

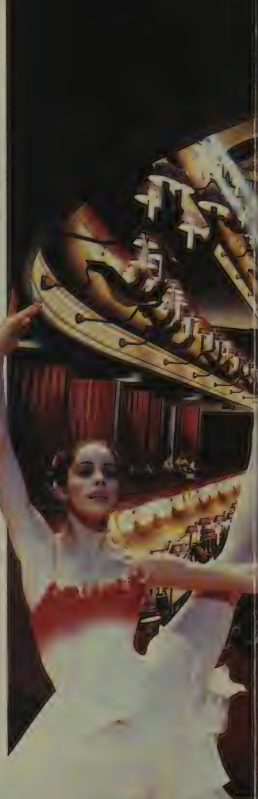
After 15 years and £214m, the new, all-singing, all-dancing Royal Opera House is almost ready to receive its public. Christopher Bowen goes backstage.

**T**he Millennium Dome and the British Airways London Eye may be the most highly visible aspects of the capital's millennial celebrations, yet they are unlikely to remain its most enduring ones. Sir Richard Rogers' spiny, upturned fruit bowl has a supposed shelf-life of about 25 years, while the world's favourite ferris wheel (well, the biggest at any rate) is likely to find a more permanent home away from the South Bank in one of the country's theme parks—at least for as long as its technical prowess and awe-inspiring impact remain unsurpassed by time. For London, then, what will remain? Oddly, it is likely to be that relatively small acreage adjacent to the capital's former fruit and vegetable market that is the home of the Royal Opera and Royal Ballet companies. Oddly, not because it is somehow unfitting, but because

of the mere fact of its achievement. Indeed, the major construction and reconstruction programme that comes to an end when, on December 4, the Royal Opera House opens its doors to the general public, is at least 100 years overdue. For most of the 20th century, Covent Garden has struggled with out-dated stage machinery, and cramped facilities both front of house and back. And for almost as long as there have been managers of the Royal Opera House (the title was awarded in 1892), there have been attempts to close the place down and start again, either on the same site or elsewhere.

The debate should have been a simple one: if the capital wants to present world-class

Top left, the great fire of 1856. Today's main auditorium, above right, where, in 1989, Darcée Bussell became the youngest principal in the Royal Ballet.



opera and ballet on a single site, what is required for that to be achieved? But marred by everything from artistic envy to political self-interest, that debate often appeared to descend into something closer to farce than grand opera. That, at least, is behind us, and the result is likely to be not just a reconstructed Victorian theatre, but the most significant and lasting cultural achievement of the capital's millennial celebrations. The reason lies not in the simple matter of investment in bricks, mortar, steel and glass, but in a renewed commitment to promote much wider access to live performances of world-class opera and ballet in the heart of the city.

This might appeal to the collective shades both of John Rich, who commissioned the first theatre on this site, and those of the nuns whose former convent garden (hence the

name for the area) provided the home for Rich's project. Though it is, of course, unlikely that the sisters would have approved of much of what has appeared on-stage there since.

John Rich was the actor-manager at Lincoln's Inn Fields who built the first of the three theatres that have occupied roughly the same site since 1732. Some five years earlier, Rich had commissioned *The Beggar's Opera* from John Gay. The success of this venture—as one wag noted at the time, “*The Beggar's Opera* made Gay rich and Rich gay”—provided capital for the Theatre Royal at Covent Garden, designed by Edward Shepherd.

Inaugurated with a performance of Congreve's *The Way of the World*, the Covent Garden theatre was primarily used as a playhouse during its first 100 years. There were notable musical events; Handel chose the venue for

the premières of his operas *Ariodante*, *Alcina*, *Atalanta* and *Berenice*. The composer seems to have been well-satisfied with the result: the organ he bequeathed to John Rich in 1759 was among the many treasures lost in a fire which swept through the theatre on the morning of September 20, 1808. A second Covent Garden theatre, commissioned from Robert Smirke in the Greek Doric style and with elegant boxes ranked on three levels around the auditorium, opened its doors on September 18, 1809, with a performance of *Macbeth* followed by a musical entertainment, *The Quaker*.

An odd double bill. But at that time it was not unusual for evenings at the theatre to be somewhat varied in content. Excerpts or even an entire play from Shakespeare might be followed by a performance on the high wire. Such variety was needed. Although Charles II





Above, the main entrance and the restored Floral Hall. Right, images of Covent Garden published in "The Illustrated London News" in 1852 showing, clockwise from top right, the crush room, the exterior in Bow Street, the interior of the Floral Hall and the auditorium.

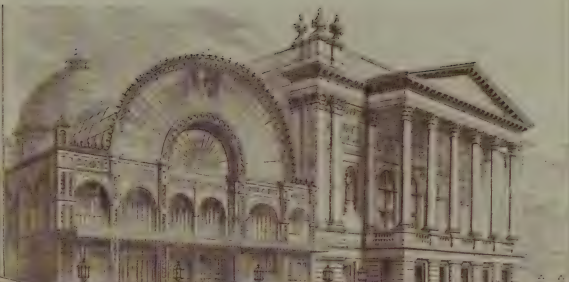
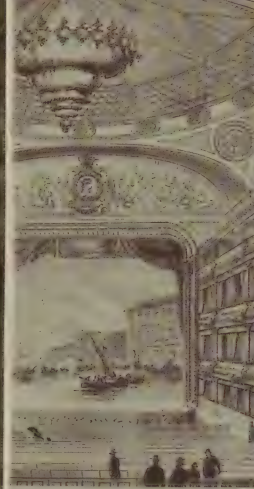
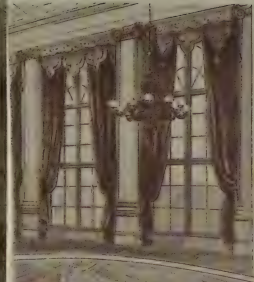
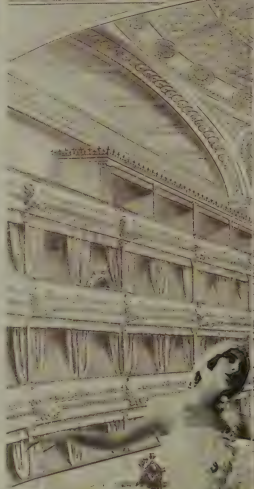
granted Letters Patent to Covent Garden and Drury Lane giving the two theatres a near-sole right to present spoken drama in the capital, it was a monopoly that was hard to enforce and, seven years into the young Queen Victoria's reign, the 1843 Theatres Act removed the monopoly entirely. Perhaps Rich had foreseen such difficulties, introducing a regular diet of pantomime into the theatre's programme (a tradition that only ended in the 1930s).

The diet became richer yet after Michael Costa transferred his allegiance and most of his singers to Covent Garden in 1847, following a disagreement with the management at Her Majesty's Theatre, until then the principal home for ballet and opera in London. The Neapolitan Costa became the first director of the Royal Italian Opera, Covent Garden, and stayed for over 20 years, being knighted in 1867 for his work. When Costa left, he did so from a different theatre, for March 1856 had seen the destruction by fire of Covent Garden mark two. The present building opened on May 15, 1858, and, by now, was very much

designed for opera and ballet. Unlike its predecessors, it opened with opera—Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots*. From then until 1939, with the exception of an interruption during the Great War, Covent Garden staged opera during the London season. Ballet followed, with winter and summer seasons of classical works giving way to more diverse fare in the spring and autumn—cabarets, lectures and dancing.

With no resident ballet company, Covent Garden relied on visiting troupes. In 1911, on the eve of George V's coronation, the Diaghilev Ballet gave its first performance in the theatre. If Diaghilev was unperturbed by the unranked stage, he was definitely surprised by the Royal Opera House's nearest neighbours, describing the theatre as "hemmed in by greengrocers' warehouses and vast mountains of cabbages, potatoes and carrots". The dress rehearsal ended swiftly: the Russian wardrobe staff had been detained at Folkestone by immigration officials, so no one could issue any costumes. The following night's performance, with the wardrobe staff backstage and Karsavina and Nijinsky out front, was still a triumph.

But it was opera which was the theatre's mainstay, with Bruno Walter as chief conductor from 1924-31, followed by Thomas Beecham from 1932-39. Beecham first conducted at Covent Garden in 1910, an *amnis*



## MAGIC MOMENTS ON STAGE

Over a century-and-a-half of great opera and ballet performances have been witnessed by Covent Garden audiences since it opened. These are some evenings to remember.

**1847** Jenny Lind, "the Swedish Nightingale", makes her debut during the inaugural season of the Royal Italian Opera.

**1861** Italian-American soprano Adelina Patti sings Amina in "La Sonnambula".

**1888** The soaring coloratura of Nellie Melba is heard for the first time at Covent Garden in "Lucia di Lammermoor" (she made her farewell at a gala in 1926).

**1902** The great Enrico Caruso sings at Covent Garden.

**1911** ▶ Anna Pavlova performs "The Dying Swan", created for her in 1905.

**1911** Diaghilev's Ballet Russes gives its first performance at Covent Garden with Nijinsky and Karsavina.

**1930** Beniamino Gigli, regarded as Caruso's successor, sings at Covent Garden for the first time.

**1947** Eva Turner's farewell performance at the Royal Opera House as Turandot, conducted by Constant Lambert.

**1948** Frederick Ashton's first full-length ballet, "Cinderella".

**1949** Peter Brook's production of "Salome" designed by Salvador Dalí. The first complete cycle of Wagner's "Der Ring des Nibelungen".

**1952** Maria Callas' debut in "Norma", with Ebe Stignani as

Adalgisa and Joan Sutherland as Clothilde.

**1957** Birgit Nilsson, the greatest Wagnerian soprano of the post-war period, premieres on the Covent Garden stage as Brünnhilde.

**1958** Leontyne Price sings "Aida" at Covent Garden for the first time.

**1961** John Gielgud directs the London première of Britten's "A Midsummer Night's Dream"

conducted by Georg Solti. **1962** Rudolf Nureyev dances Albrecht, partnering Margot Fonteyn's Giselle.

**1963** Frederick Ashton creates Marguerite and Armand for Fonteyn and Nureyev.

**1963** Luciano Pavarotti makes his debut as Rodolfo in "La bohème".

**1964** ▶ Franco Zeffirelli's production of "Tosca" with Maria Callas and Tito Gobbi.







ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

As well as the refurbished main auditorium, the Royal Opera House will have two further performance spaces—a new 420-seater studio theatre, left, and a ballet studio which can accommodate 200 spectators. The Floral Hall, built in 1859 and badly damaged by fire in 1956, has been restored and now forms one of a sequence of foyers, incorporating the main bar. Upstairs the amphitheatre foyer gives access to an open-air loggia overlooking the piazza. The main stage has been rebuilt, with new stage lifts and a flytower; scenery storage capacity has been vastly extended and the orchestra pit widened. Rehearsal rooms, four new ballet studios and workshops complete the picture.

mirabilis for opera in London, with a total of 270 opera performances, 109 conducted by Beecham. Richard Strauss came and conducted *Elektra*—and raised his fee from 100 guineas to £200 a night for the privilege.

During World War II, the theatre became a Mecca dance hall, and might have remained so had not music publishers Bossey & Hawkes acquired a lease on the building. With David Webster as general administrator, Ninette de Valois' Sadler's Wells Ballet was invited to make Covent Garden its home, reopening the theatre with a sumptuous production of *The Sleeping Beauty* designed by Oliver Messel.

In the absence of any suitable opera company available to take up residence, Webster, with music director Karl Rankl, began to build one, and in February 1946 was able to stage *The Fairy Queen* together with the ballet company. Eleven months later, in January 1947, the Covent Garden Opera Company gave its first performance of *Carmen*.

Since 1956 and 1968 respectively, The Royal Ballet and The Royal Opera have made Covent Garden a byword for productions of high standard attracting the superstars of both artforms—Callas, Fonteyn, Di Stefano, Nureyev, Sutherland, Pavarotti, Baryshnikov, Makarova, Domingo. Now, The Royal Ballet has found a permanent home at Covent Garden, having for years used a rehearsal base in west London. For Royal Ballet principal

Deborah Bull, the new House "will be able to do what the old theatre couldn't"—provide a physical environment where the Company, as an integral part of the Royal Opera House, presents the best quality art to the greatest number of people possible.

Attracting ever-greater numbers of people to opera and ballet is central to the Royal Opera House's post-rebuilding ethos. After years of complaints about limited access and over-priced tickets, the reconstruction of the theatre's public and backstage areas, the development of public spaces in the Floral Hall, the creation of a Studio Theatre and the installation of enhanced broadcasting facilities mean that not only will Covent Garden be able to cater for a significant increase in visitors attending performances and activities on-site, but that it will also be better equipped to extend a global appreciation of opera and ballet.

Over the last century, the development of recording led to wider appreciation first of opera, then of ballet. Broadcast performances of opera and ballet at once feed and starve the artforms they depict; attracting some to the passion and thrill of the live performance, leaving others satisfied at one remove with the CD or the video. Few could deny that Covent Garden, for many years, suffered from a belief that the experience of live opera and ballet was both expensive and unattainable. Short of demolishing Barry's 1858 building and

starting again, Covent Garden seems determined that opinion is consigned to history.

Of course, building a new home in London for The Royal Opera and Ballet along the lines of New York's Met or the vast Paris Opéra Bastille might have made more sense in terms of ticket revenue; the remodelled Covent Garden auditorium may have 660 more seats, but its capacity still falls far short of its international rivals. Yet Royal Opera House executive director, Michael Kaiser, sees this as a positive advantage. "There is an intimacy in this theatre that would certainly have been lost had we moved elsewhere. The size of the House allows the audience to experience opera and ballet in a way that cannot be achieved in a larger venue. I think the most exciting thing about the redevelopment is that while we have this marvellous new facility, we haven't sacrificed the essential audience experience that is unique to the Royal Opera House."

The renewed Royal Opera House and the restored Floral Hall are already proving to be landmark buildings for visitors and citizens alike. But the choicest view is one that only a few will ever see—that from the light-filled rehearsal studio high above Covent Garden Plaza with breathtaking views across the rooftops of central London. Inspirational! Definitely. Appropriate? Probably. After all, if we call them stars, shouldn't they have the opportunity to catch a glimpse of the heavens?

1964/1965 Fonteyn and Nureyev dance at the premiere of Kenneth MacMillan's "Romeo and Juliet".

1971 Plácido Domingo appears at Covent Garden for the first time as Cavaradossi in "Tosca".

1974 José Carreras takes the stage at Covent Garden as Alfredo in "La traviata".

1981 First British performance of three-act version of Berg's "Lulu".

1989 Darczy Russell is Princess Rose in Kenneth MacMillan's "Prince of the Pagodas".

1990 Joan Sutherland's farewell to the operatic stage in Britain (a "guest" in "Die Fledermaus", together with Marilyn Horne and Luciano Pavarotti).

1998 Roberto Alagna and Angela Gheorghiu of the Norwegian National Opera make their debuts as Rodolfo and Mimi in "La bohème".

1999 The Royal Opera House reopens with a Gala Performance on December 4.



COURTESY ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

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11 Bellini, *The Madonna and Child*, 1801. *12* French School, *Portrait and Saint Paul*, 16th century, 1565. Birmingham Museum 13 Gallery, Fund donated 1977.

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# The travel revolution

Over the last century, increasingly sophisticated modes of travel have brought even remote places within the reach of the casual visitor. Is this endangering the famous and treasured sights of the world, asks Simon Winchester?

For both Alexander Kinglake and Queen Victoria, 1842 was an important and, one might say, a seminal year. Mr Kinglake, a barrister and amateur historian, completed in that year a book that still stands as perhaps the finest work of English travel literature; while Her Majesty, needing to go from Windsor to central London, took the revolutionary step of choosing a place called Paddington as her destination and of getting there by train. What neither knew was that by these two simple acts, they charted the division of the business of travel into two quite separate worlds which, for many years, would not properly meet again.

Alexander Kinglake, whose book *Eastern* has in more than a century and half never been out of print, represented on one hand the elitism, the exclusivity of individual travel—the lone Victorian hero-traveller whose wanderings through (in this case) the Near East provided a wealth of entertainment and amusement for those millions left behind to their armchairs and their dreams. The Queen's journey by train, on the other hand, ushered in the era of mass travel—it helped to popularise and promulgate the new reality that travel could be speedy, wide-ranging, and inexpensive, and that it could be accomplished by ordinary people.

From this moment on, the Kinglakes and their like could, of course, continue to provide the dreams. But now, for the first time, a series of infernal new inventions—in this case the "permanent way" but then, as the years passed, the tarmac-adam road, the liner-dock, the runway and the jumbo jet—could help turn those dreams into beguiling realities for almost everybody. Not for nothing was Her Majesty's rail journey accomplished at almost the same time that a young temperance league member named Thomas Cook organised drink-free rail excursions for his teetotal disciples: a new age was being welcomed in, geography was being democratised, the world was suddenly showing her secrets to all who might care to look.

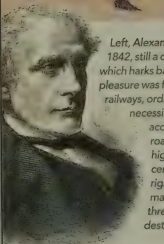
Up until that moment, even the word travel, let alone the idea of it, had connotations very different from those of today. Travel is its root a Latin word, *tripalium*, which means a three-legged instrument of torture. From this we get, via the French word *travail*, the word *travail*, which of course means work, hard work. From *travail* it was but a small semantic leap to reach travel itself. Back in the days before Thomas Cook and the rail-

Travel has progressed from horses, below, to horsepower, top left. Queen Victoria's Royal Railway Carriage, 1842. Top right, M. Blériot's flight across the Channel in 1909, catapulted international travel from land and sea into the air where, less than a century later, it has gone supersonic, top.





## 150 years of travel



Left, Alexander Kinglake wrote "Eothen", in 1842, still a classic of English travel literature, which harks back to a time when travel for pleasure was for the privileged few. Prior to the railways, ordinary people travelled only out of necessity. Coaches were prone to accidents on atrocious, unpaved roads and passengers were prey to highwaymen and robbers. More than a century of progress in transport, right, by rail, sea and air has spawned mass travel—which, ironically, now threatens to destroy the desirable destinations made easily accessible.

way barons of the Great Western, travel was indeed regarded as something really quite arduous, a feat to be attempted by the very courageous or the very hardy. None save those made of flint and steel ever undertook a journey for fun.

Imagine a person living in a London village, say, bent on journeying to Rutland. The only way to make a journey—forgetting canals, which did provide some very select destinations—was by road. And in the early-19th century, what roads? Those beyond Barnet were no more than sloughs of springtime mud and summertime ruts. Farmers choked them with herds of cattle; accidents happened everywhere; highwaymen preyed on those who might stop to repair a wheel or shoe a horse. There were a few sections of highway patrolled by police and with paving that was rudimentary but effective—but these (20,000 miles of them across all England at the beginning of the century) were only made pukka by the spending of the turnpike trusts. So you might bump along for a dozen miles, stop to pay a fee at a toll-booth and be rewarded with a few miles of half-cent private toll-road which had been improved by the engineering genius of Thomas Telford or John Macadam—then it would be back to bumping and mud and overturned wagons (three found one day in a single section of the short road from Manchester to Stockport, one passer-by of 1842 noted with asperity).

Across in Europe, the road situation was little better—except in post-revolutionary France (where the brutal *corvée* system brought thousands of workers in to improve communications) and in southern Germany and Switzerland. Travel was very dangerous in Europe—gangs, gauged with the knife, abounded—but, at least, the road surface on those three specific regions was said by such Englishmen as visited to be impressive. Elsewhere that travel on the Continent was very much as the linguistic roots of the Romans and the French had suggested: hard, harsh and anything but fun.

Oh yes, I can hear from exclaiming minds—but what about The Grand Tour? This was, after all, no new phenomenon, it had been going on since



the 17th century, with legions of young men (and the very occasional young woman) sent out across the Channel to see the cultural capitals of Europe. They passed in stately fashion from London to Antwerp, Hamburg to Athens, Paris to Vienna, the better to sharpen their minds and their cultural sensitivities. Was this not travel for pleasure and, not at all as I have been suggesting, some irksome and risky venture carried out mainly for reasons of necessity or duty? And, of course, the answer has to be that yes, the Grand Tour was very much undertaken for amusement, for fun, and that it did, indeed, attract by years all other subsequent kinds of pleasure-travel. But, and it is a big but, Grand Touring was strictly the preserve of the very rich. So very few young men and women actually undertook it that one might almost lump them along with Kinglake and his like the exclusivity of their journeying was very much a part of the appeal of the venture.

What the Queen's 15-mile railway journey and Thomas Cook's 50-mile railway excursion achieved, by contrast, was to remove almost totally the narrow exclusivity, the high price and the debilitating pain from the experience of travel—so that journeying, all of a sudden, became popular and began to mesh with the desire, the abilities and financial capacity of all.

The railway started the revolution. But, before long, the roads got better, too—Messrs Telford and Macadam, specialists in such mundane matters as culvert-building and camber-creation, had an influence on the nature of travel that, in time, was every bit as great as Richard Trevithick and George Stephenson, who made railway engines. Later on, the great passenger liners and cruise ships would open up the oceans; and then Louis Blériot and Charles Lindbergh and Frank Whittle would open up the skies—and the



whole world would be eventually on the move, one frantic, pulsating mass of mankind set on an endless quest—for what? The entire world was slowly dragged into the realm of the visitable. Travel, from the 1840s onwards would in time render the planet available to all. But what else did this vast explosion of a hitherto unfamiliar human activity bring in its wake? On one level, perhaps not a whole lot of good things—not as we see things now, at least. Much of what is not good about the impact of travel relates to the scale of the thing, to the feeling that somehow travel, now unleashed, is on the loose and wreaking havoc. There are just too many tourists. The world is fast being made all the same to accommodate them and make them think they are happy. There is near-universal overcrowding. Pollution. Traffic jams. We watch in stupefied horror the ruin of delicate places—Venice, the Grand Canyon, Oxford, Tuscany. And all this has to do with the simple vastness of what was created by that first train ride, 157 years ago. Next year, travel will overtake agriculture to become, in dollar terms, the largest industry in the world. From the manufacture of jet aircraft to the establishment of bed-and-breakfast inns, from the making of bicycle wheels to the printing of bus tickets, travel has become incomprehensibly immense. The transporting of people from one place to another—to conduct business, to satisfy curiosity, to escape, to learn, to spread the word of God, to go to war, to take pleasure—has become an unstoppable juggernaut. But it is a monster with a sufficiently visible slew of disadvantages to make one wonder whether, in the coming century, mass travel is a phenomenon to be encouraged—or not.

Consider the Tower of London (and its Crown Jewels), now equipped with a moving walkway to give the hordes a better view of the gawwags of the British monarchy. The walkway has to go faster every year, to accommodate the growing press of people. Before long the Chinese government will let its citizens come to England as tourists. One hundred million Chinese will be let loose on the world. Two per cent of those will come to Europe, and half of those to England. A million extra tourists, all Chinese,



are on the brink of coming; there will be twice that a year later, ten times more in five years' time. And how fast will the Crown Jewels walkway have to run then? What will the experience be? Will anyone wonder—is this what we want? Is this what travel is really all about?

And as for the Crown Jewels, so also for the Pyramids at Giza, for Angkor Wat, for the Sydney Opera House, and for St Mark's in Venice and St Peter's in Rome—all of these great monuments bending, and perhaps before long breaking, under the weight of humanity eager to see these 'sights', to photograph and be photographed, and then to move on to feed at some other 'sight' elsewhere.

And for what? Blaise Pascal, the great mathematician-philosopher wondered about this coming phenomenon two centuries earlier, when he wrote the lines in his *Pensées sur la religion* that remain, perhaps, the most thoughtful indictment of the dangers of mass travel: *"Toute malheur des hommes,"* he wrote, *"vient d'une seule chose, qui est de ne savoir pas demeurer en repos dans une chambre."* (All the misfortunes of men derive from one single thing, which is their inability to be at peace in a room at home.)

How true, one is tempted to say. If man stayed at home there would be so little wrong with the world. There would be no overcrowding at the Tate Gallery, no traffic jams on the Paris *périphérique*, no pollution in the Grand Canal, no estuary English in the Dordogne. There would be no Imperialism either, no foreign conquest, no Crusades, no Balkan problems—indeed, little by way of conflict or war anywhere. There would have been no missionaries interfering with local cultures in Asia or Latin America, no outbreaks of foreign-imported measles in Polynesia nor typhus in Tonga, no opium dealing in China, no alien systems of government in India or Burma or Indonesia. The list is endless of the disadvantages that have been caused by man's restlessness and his need to see what lies over the horizon, and his subsequent demand to change whatever he finds, so that it becomes more recognisably his own. And the corollary is abundantly clear: no more travel—no more problems.

But it is so difficult to stop. We are still hopelessly lured by all those brochures, by the siren-calls of soft sand, beaches and sun, by the tropic nights. But, at the same time, we know now, at least instinctively, that something is going wrong. That too many people are going to too few places in too much of a hurry. Still, we go ourselves, secure in the knowledge that however bad it may be today it will soon become even worse. We go now so that we can say that we were lucky enough to see it, wherever it may be, when it was still nice, still unspoiled, still unravaged by those horses yet to come. We look back fondly these days to figures like Alexander Kinglake and we listen to him relate the story of *Eothen*, and we wonder at the raw experience of individual travel, and of the revelations that it can impart to those who stay at home. But this time, instead of merely copying what he did, we must wonder, perhaps, whether it is time to take a different approach, whether the time has come for the joyride to slow down—or even stop.

What Alexander Kinglake and Queen Victoria unwittingly set in motion a century and a half ago must now be checked—and we, unhappily, are the generation that must be charged with doing so. Have we the wherewithal to slow the pace, to bring some civility to a business lately gone mad? Or do we whirl and whirl, dervish-like, until travel becomes a literal impossibility and we are forced to stay at home, our feet on the Ottoman, reading old books and wondering wistfully what the outside world might be like?

**SIMON WINCHESTER** is Asia-Pacific Editor for Condé Nast Traveller and a contributor to The Daily Telegraph, The Spectator and the BBC. He is also author of the best selling *The Surgeon of Crowthorne*, soon to be made into a film.





well, an early example of sports sponsorship in the *ILN* in 1846—the annual Shrove Tuesday football match at Kingston-upon-Thames, where “The poorer classes play for money and beer subscribed by the townsmen.”

The epitome of the modern sporting hero in 1976, as a 22-year-old, Ian Botham stormed into Test match cricket and in a superb show of all-rounder virtuosity, best Pakistan with his single-handedly. His explosive talent and temperament made him a favourite with the crowds. Right, Botham facing Pakistan in 1976.

## Sporting Greats

Modern sport, with its celebrity players and sponsorship, can trace its roots to the 1840s when the first issue of *ILN* rolled off the press. Frank Keating examines the emergence of superstars and promoters and picks his team of top British personalities who have shaped sport as it is played today.

**W**hat is most likely the first pictorial representation in any publication of the phenomenon known today as sport appeared in the *ILN* issue of February 28, 1846. Two teams from Kingston-upon-Thames are depicted playing their annual Shrove Tuesday football match in the market square. The caption notes “the poorer classes play for money and beer” paid for by wealthier townsmen. Aha! So sports sponsorship existed even then.

The birth of the magazine coincided with social trends which laid the foundations of modern sport. The Penny Post of 1840 enabled fixtures to be arranged and reported—and, crucially, accounts to be circulated. Parliamentary legislation restricted working hours, which meant time off to play and watch matches. Players and spectators were able to travel all over the country on the burgeoning new railway network. By 1850, almost 7,000 miles of track had been laid, linking just about all the major towns and cities.

And team sports were up and running, thanks in large part to Dr Thomas Arnold, the religious scholar, intellectual and visionary headmaster of Rugby School whose death coincided with the launch of *ILN*. Before Arnold, team games were virtually unknown. Disbanding blood sports clubs at his school, he encouraged more civilised activities among his charges. The rough football they played changed forever in 1823 when a pupil

is said to have picked up a ball and run with it. Thus rugby came into being. It was thanks to Arnold that some years later the Royal Commission of Public Schools could sum up the new games ethos: “The cricket and football fields are not merely places of exercise and amusement; they help to form some of the most valuable social qualities and manly virtues.”

Sport’s first superstar, W G Grace, son of a Bristol doctor, was born in 1848, as sport spread across the playing fields of England. The building trades established a four o’clock Saturday finish in the same year, and soon George Cadbury, founder of the cocoa empire, closed his factories at midday on Saturdays.

Before Arnold and before Grace, the “great sportsman” knew nothing of team games; he was, indeed, totally oblivious to what we now term athletic pursuits. He was a chap who rode to hounds, shot game by the cartload, fished exclusive streams for salmon and trout, and perhaps threw off his boots for a tumble in bed with a chambermaid before going down to table to consume gargantuan amounts of his “kill”, roasted and washed down with copious draughts of ale and port wine. For this man, sport was killing something and game was what he killed.

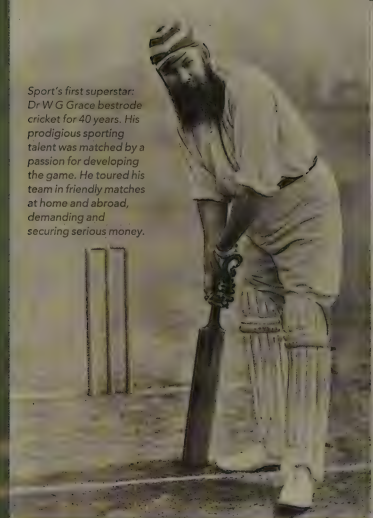
A small footnote in sporting history was written when five-year-old William Grace watched a local team play the visiting All England XI



A bust of Dr Thomas Arnold, visionary headmaster of Rugby School, who banned blood sports at the school and encouraged the boys to play football. In 1823, a boy picked up the ball and the rest is history...



Sport’s first superstar: Dr W G Grace bestrode cricket for 40 years. His prodigious sporting talent was matched by a passion for developing the game. He toured his team in friendly matches at home and abroad, demanding and securing serious money.



Below, Fred Perry won his third Wimbledon men’s singles championship in 1936, after which he turned professional, earning a, then, staggering £10,000 for a four-month exhibition tour.







brought to the West Country by William Clarke, the celebrated cricketer from Nottingham.

Seated with his mother in a pony trap beside the field, the youngster would have beheld the top-hatted All Englanders sporting a basic strip of red dots on a white background. They had an eye for commercialism even then, selling replicas of their colours before and after the match.

Clarke recruited the best players for his annual round-Britain jaunt—the world's first professional team tour. He charged 65 guineas upfront for his team's appearance. After stumps were drawn, he called up his players one by one, saying: "Four pounds for you" or "Fifty shillings for you", depending on seniority and performance. Then, with a smile of satisfaction, he pocketed the balance with the words "W £37 for me!"

It was a lesson which W G Grace never forgot during the four decades he bestrode the sporting world. He charged £100—worth some £3,500 today—to put up his team for a friendly match in England. His 10 professionals received £5 each for two days' work, leaving £50 for himself. He asked for, and got, a staggering £1,500 for his first tour of Australia and more than doubled that amount for his second trip Down Under in 1891-92.

Unquestionably, the great Doctor, with his blazing talent, founded modern sport. As Lord Hawke noted: "No monument, no portrait, no book, can adequately represent his vitality or his superb skill at the game he loved and, almost, invented."

A few years later, across the Atlantic in Texas, a former Cornish blacksmith also had an eye for future trends in sport. Bob Fitzsimmons was the challenger in a boxing match for the heavyweight

championship of the world. He demanded a cut of the film rights negotiated by promoter Dan Stuart. "Nonsense," said Stuart. "Your contract pays you for fightin', not actin'." "Okay," said Fitz. "No cut, no movie pictures." No sooner had the bell sounded for the opening round than he hit his opponent Peter Maher smack on the jaw. Maher was counted out before the camera operators could get their Kinetoscope equipment started! Fitzsimmons made sure his contract included a clause for film rights when he fought for the undisputed world championship the following year.

My round-up of the key figures of early sport would not be complete without mention of three other personalities. The England cricket captain Heathfield Harman Stephenson—known to all simply as HH—took sport worldwide with his pioneering tours to Canada, the USA and Australia. Stephenson was Surrey's first captain when the outlines were drawn up for the County Championship, which his team was to win at the inaugural competition of 1864. My other remarkable sportsman is Ronnie Poulton-Palmer who in the early 1900s was to become—and remains—England's most accomplished and dashing international rugby footballer. As author A A Thomson put it: "Ronnie was our delectable dazzler of dazblers." Finally, we meet Jack Hobbs, a cricketer who wilyly moved from young Surrey professional to England player, becoming the finest and most prolific batsman the game has ever seen.

As we move to sportsmen born in the 20th century, a new generation of heroes enter my pantheon, all of them enriching sport but not necessarily their bank balances in their early years. Fred

Perry, son of a Stockport cotton-spinner, won his first Wimbledon tennis championship, aged 20, in 1929. Perry reigned supreme at a time when Wimbledon kept the amateur banner flying. After his third men's singles title in 1936, he turned professional after being offered £10,000 for a four-month exhibition tour. At Wimbledon, though, it was not until 1968 that the championships were opened to professionals.

Stanley Matthews, whose first-class career lasted an astonishing 33 years, achieved fame, and a knighthood—but only a fraction of the remuneration that today's top footballers command. And Roger Bannister, a young student of neurosurgery, made not a penny when he broke the record for running a mile inside four minutes on May 6, 1954. Rather than cash-in on his new-found fame, which spread around the globe like wildfire, he went into hiding from the press.

On Epsom Downs the following month, 19-year-old Lester Piggott began an unrivalled career by riding Never Say Die to victory in the Derby. A string of Classic wins followed, including a record eight more Derbies, eight St Leger, six Oaks, five 2000 Guineas and two 1000 Guineas.

Piggott acquired some £20 million in a career which brought him over 5,000 winners before retiring in 1985 to establish himself as a trainer. A couple of years later, though, he met a rival he could not beat. He was given three years in jail after admitting tax fraud of £31,000.

A year after Piggott burst on to the horseracing scene, cricketer Ian Botham was born in Cheshire. He went on to announce his arrival in his chosen sport in just as spectacular a fashion. In the finest



all-round performance ever seen by an England Test player, 22-year-old Botham beat Pakistan virtually single-handedly at Lord's in June 1978 and established himself as the most exciting England cricketer for years to come. His terrific century was capped by bowling figures of 8 for 34, the best by an England bowler since Jim Laker in 1956.

It was Botham again on July 21, 1981, when, in one of the most remarkable reversals in Test history, England recovered from the near certainty of defeat to turn the tables on Australia. Botham blasted 149 not out as England's last three wickets amassed 221. Australia, needing only 130 runs to win, collapsed against the speed of Bob Willis whose 8 for 43 saw England home by 18 runs.

Botham was a joy to watch. He played every game with body, soul, heart and wits. His exploits were lapped up by the press, on the front and back pages, and he came to epitomise the modern sporting hero. As both personality and phenomenon, he would surely have met with Dr Arnold's approval. I fancy that this aesthete, scholar and public school gentleman would have observed the progress of sport as embodied by Botham—and hurried. And surely it is not too fanciful to claim that these two sportsmen, along with the other ten personalities mentioned above, with their verve and wise innocence, could be said to have shaped sports as we know it today. Whether in team game or individual sport, all were in their time the very best in the world in their chosen sphere.

**FRANK KEATING** has been *The Guardian's* sports correspondent for 30 years. His books include *Classic Moments from a Century of Sport* (Robson Books, £8.99).

*Above, left to right: William Clarke, manager of the All England XI, pioneered team tours in the mid-19th century. Bob Fitzsimmons knocks out Jack Dempsey to win the Middleweight world title, in America, in 1891. Fitzsimmons also held the world Heavyweight title, the only British man ever to do so.*

*Sir Stanley Matthews whose career spanned 33 years, in action aged 42; Sir John Berry Hobbs' record 197 centuries in a first-class career, 1905-34, still stands.*

*Below, left to right: H H Stephenson (in striped shirt), England and Surrey captain, pioneered tours abroad in the 1860s; in the early 1900s Ronnie Poulton-Palmer (left) was, and remains, the most accomplished rugby international; Roger Bannister's 3 mins 59.4 seconds of fame, in 1954; Lester Piggott, the fastest man on four legs.*



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# London's hidden depths

Simon Thurley unearths 160 years of archaeology in London.

Sculptured stone, such as this bearded Roman deity, is a rare find on excavation sites.

A Roman emerald necklace with gold links from the 1st-2nd centuries AD. The emeralds originated in Egypt.

At precisely 7.50pm on April 14, six men clad in white bodyuits and masks gently lifted the highly-decorated lead lid of a Roman coffin. Inside were the remains of a young woman who had died in her 20s and been laid to rest in a shroud shot through with gold threads. Her head rested on a bed of bay leaves, some of which were almost as fresh as the day they had been placed there. In the gap between the coffin and the great stone sarcophagus in which it was found, were glass vessels. They had contained either wines drunk at her funeral feast, or ointments which had embalmed her.

The Spitalfields Roman, as this young woman has become known, was discovered in the northern Roman cemetery of London, sited just east of Bishopsgate and not far from Hawksmoor's masterpiece, Christ Church, Spitalfields. She died during the early-4th century, when London was dominated by a small number of rich families who had made their fortunes from huge, agricultural estates. Between them they controlled the whole

of Britain. The Spitalfields Roman was almost certainly a member of such a family. Her bones reveal that she never gave birth, so perhaps she was betrothed to the son of another rich Roman family before being carried off by some fatal infection.

In the history of London archaeology, the Spitalfields Roman holds a special place. Despite being one of the most excavated cities in the world, it has been notoriously difficult for archaeologists to get close to the everyday people of London's past. Many cemeteries have been excavated, but the bones which they contain are almost always anonymous, without any clue to the person's social status, let alone a name or title. Work has only just begun on unravelling the past of the Spitalfields Roman, but for the first time the full extent of modern science will be concentrated on gathering information from her remains. In time, DNA testing, isotope analysis and other modern techniques will reveal much more about her.

Although it has been difficult to come close to individual ancient Londoners, archaeology, over

the last 160 years, has enhanced our knowledge of ourselves and our city. Excavations in London, especially since World War II, have transformed what was a sketchy picture of our past, into one in which we understand better than ever before, the lives, deaths, loves and concerns of our ancestors. This desire to unearth the details of our ancestors' lives has deep roots. The first known archaeological excavation in London was in 1385, when the Lord Mayor ordered a dig to discover an ancient property boundary to settle a dispute. However, the real credit for founding London archaeology should go to Sir Christopher Wren who, while rebuilding the City after the fire of 1666, realised that London was founded by the Romans and was not a prehistoric settlement.

Archaeology in London over the last century and a-half has been almost exclusively reactive: what is called rescue archaeology—saving remains from the developer's bulldozer. An early pioneer was the businessman-turned-archaeologist Charles Roach-Smith who, between 1834 and 1865, began

to record remains exposed by the construction of the great Victorian sewer network. Only a few years later London played host to the excavations of the founder of modern archaeology, General Pitt-Rivers, who dug in the Walbrook Valley. In the 1920s, an early director of the London Museum, Sir Mortimer Wheeler's excavations led to important discoveries about Roman and Saxon London. These early archaeologists began to establish the crucial and salient facts about London, and the lives of its inhabitants, but their work was restricted by the lack of opportunity to examine large areas of the City.

War in 1939 created the largest archaeological site London has ever known. A third of the city was destroyed by Hitler's bombs, providing 15 years of continuous work for the late Professor W F Grimes. He discovered the Roman fort, managed to date the city walls and to excavate the Roman Temple of Mithras. But Grimes had only a small team and enormous opportunities were missed—many bomb sites were redeveloped without any

investigation. Moreover, the modern city is built on archaeological deposits, which lie up to 20 feet below pavement level, and this makes any excavation in London time-consuming, difficult and often dangerous. Grimes' poor resources made a serious study of this deep stratigraphy impossible.

By 1973 intensive and unsupervised post-war development meant that only about 25 per cent of the city's archaeological deposits survived intact and it became imperative that every site should be excavated when the opportunity arose. A massive building boom started in the mid-1980s, coinciding with the deregulation of the stock market. Property prices soared, particularly in the City, and Museum of London archaeologists began a series of excavations, which not only filled the museum with rich finds, but also transformed our knowledge of the lives of Londoners.

This transformation came about because London is at the bottom of a valley, founded alongside the Thames and its tributaries the Walbrook and the Fleet. Therefore, the site of London has always

been wet, and this wetness has created below-ground conditions known as anoxic. This means that, because of a lack of oxygen, organic materials which would normally decay in the ground, survive in near-perfect condition. And this is why visitors to the Museum of London today can see Roman and Saxon shoes, Tudor woollen stockings, a medieval banana skin and more.

So what has 150 years of exposing the detritus of everyday life taught us about ourselves and our predecessors in London? The story is, perhaps inevitably, one of both continuity and change, but on the eve of the millennium the powerful strands of continuity with the past may be more important than the changes London has seen. The classical historian Tacitus, writing in about 60AD tells us that "London was crowded by traders and a great centre of commerce", and 1100 years later, William Fitzstephen wrote that London still spread its "fame and merchandise far and wide". Trade was based on the river, upon boats and the

Left, an artist's impression of 2nd century Roman London, superimposed on today's city.

A banana skin, preserved for 500 years in the remains of a Tudor pigke farm in Southwark, reveals that the fruit was imported into England 300 years earlier than previously thought.

A woollen vest, sock and mitten that once belonged to a Tudor child, excavated from the Baynard's Castle site in the 1970s.





LEFT, BELOW AND BELOW RIGHT: MUSEUM OF LONDON

ability of Londoners to build a port. Some of the earliest objects excavated in London are from the Mediterranean, including jars for wine and olive oil from Spain, glass from Italy and Syria and beautifully decorated pottery lamps from Gaul. To bring these goods in, it was necessary to create a port with deep-water berths for sea-going vessels. Gradually, over the period from the first century to the 15th, quaysides were built which allowed goods to be unloaded in the centre of the city. These massive timber quays, in time, reduced the original width of the river by 100 metres. Several have been excavated which demonstrate that the Romans had the organisation and technology to manhandle massive pieces of oak into place.

Not only has London's ancient port been excavated, but so too have many of its ships. The earliest of these is a Roman galley found by the London Museum during the construction of County Hall in 1911. Only six months ago, near Tower Bridge, a medieval boat was unearthed, complete with its rowlocks, which would have plied its trade up and down the Thames 600 years ago.

Today's Thames is a pale shadow of the artery it once was. The roads have, since the 17th century, relieved it of its local traffic and during the 1970s heavy commerce was relocated from the docks to Tilbury where vast container ships could berth. Yet the city still trades, but in bonds, futures and currency rather than cloth, spices and luxury goods as in the past.

London was founded on trade, and trade brought immigration. People from all over Britain and Europe settled here. Many of London's early traders were foreigners and many of its workers migrants. Evidence of Flemings, the Dutch, Jews, Italians and Germans have been found in excavations, as has evidence of the wealth they brought. It is rare to find the fabulous textiles that many of them imported; less rare are other luxury goods, such as jewellery, silverwork, gold encrusted with precious stones, enamel, glass, pewter and leather work. The most famous group of luxury products found from the medieval city is the Cheapside Hoard, the extraordinary cache of 340 priceless objects including jewellery, scent bottles and watches found by

workmen excavating in Cheapside in 1912. At the time these trinkets were made, Cheapside was the Oxford Street of London, teeming with shops, and booths filled with the produce of the world.

London was a great, cosmopolitan city from the day it was founded, and archaeology shows us that the traditions of immigration, entrepreneurialism, and trade underpin its existence. It also shows that these characteristics have contributed to another fundamental strand of continuity—our diet. Curries, coffee houses and kebabs are not as new as we might like to think. Careful sieving of archaeological deposits and the examination of residues in vessels show that herbs and spices, peppers, coriander, coconuts and bananas have been available in London since at least Tudor times, and often much earlier. Cooking pots, plates, knives, forks and spoons, the remains of eating houses, inns and taverns and the contents of their latrines all go to build a picture of a diet which was far from parochial. Scores of different types of fish were served—the bones of many varieties not eaten today are commonly excavated. Similarly, our ancestors enjoyed a wide variety of birds, from herons, swans and starlings, to the more familiar geese and ducks.

Archaeology is perhaps a surprising source of comfort and continuity on the eve of the millennium, but for those who dedicate their lives to unearthing London's past there is a reassuring sense of familiarity to many discoveries. The Spitalfields Roman, in some ways, opens a new chapter for London's archaeology. As techniques developed by medical science and criminal pathology are increasingly applied to archaeology, so the chance of us getting close to ancient Londoners increases. In less than 20 years' time we will be able to understand better the details of individuals' lives. When we do, will we still find those reassuring strands of continuity? Or will we find that our ancestors were very different from ourselves? I know where I would place my money. ■ The major exhibition *London Eats Out* is running at the Museum of London until 27 February 2000.

**SIMON THURLEY** is director of the Museum of London. He lectures all over the world, and contributes to radio and television programmes. He is currently working on a film for the Faith Zone in the Millennium Dome.

The Spitalfields Roman, above, whose bones may eventually yield valuable information about Roman life. Right, remarkably well-preserved leather shoes. Below right, the Cheapside Hoard. Below, a Roman galley, discovered in 1911.





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# Putting London on the Map

Peter Ackroyd, whose books are redolent of London and its past, chooses the 12 historic figures he considers to have most influenced contemporary life in the capital.

Above from left: Alfred Hitchcock; Marie Lloyd; Jack the Ripper; George Lansbury; Joseph Bazalgette; Charles Booth; and James McNeill Whistler have all left their mark on the city of London.

## CHANGING THE FACE OF THE CITY

**JOSEPH BAZALGETTE** If contemporary London owes its shape and structure to any one man, it is to Joseph Bazalgette. Almost unknown today, his work within London is arguably more significant than that of Nash or Wren. He was in every sense a great Victorian, filled with enormous energy and practicality. It was Bazalgette who designed and installed the underground system of sewers, still in use more than a century later. He designed and constructed the Chelsea and Victoria Embankments; he built several important thoroughfares such as Shaftesbury Avenue and Charing Cross Road; he strengthened or rebuilt all the bridges across the Thames and, if that were not enough in itself, he acquired or extended such open spaces as Battersea Park, Victoria Park, Clapham Common and Blackheath. It was an enormous achievement and it is not too much to say that Bazalgette transformed the face of London. If anyone deserves to be placed upon the empty plinth in Trafalgar Square, it is he.

## IMPROVING THE EAST END

**JACK THE RIPPER** The real name of this significant London figure remains unknown and many volumes have pursued his identity without success. He is not included here on account of his crimes but because his career of murder in 1888 effectively opened the East End to public scrutiny. The locale of the horrors, sensationally publicised in the press, brought to the attention of the middle-class in the West End the presence of dark alleys where violence, prostitution and infanticide were commonplace. As a result of the Ripper's crimes, the East End became known as "the abysms"; missions and church halls were established in the adjacent neighbourhoods, as well as social and economic commissions designed to improve the conditions of the people who lived there. So it came about that terrible urban crime actually generated significant social improvement across a wide swathe of London.

## FOUNDING MUNICIPAL SOCIALISM

**GEORGE LANSBURY** Undoubtedly the greatest of all London politicians, Lansbury was born near Lowestoft (he was the grandfather of the American actress Angela Lansbury), but quickly became identified with the capital and with city radicalism. He was MP for Bow and Bromley, but in 1919 he became Mayor of Poplar. In that capacity, he defeated the government over the level of unemployment relief to be given to the people of that borough; his cause became known as Populism, a version of populism which caught the imagination of generations of London politicians. He was the founder of what also became known as "municipal socialism"; his influence has therefore been profound not only on London, but also on cities throughout the world.

## MAPPING THE UNDERGROUND

**HARRY BECK** The name of Harry Beck is not widely known, even among Londoners, and yet he created the most enduring image of London. He was responsible for the creation and publication of the London Underground Map. He first planned it on a sheet of paper and, with the instinctive grasp of genius, created a simple construction out of a complex whole. Where previous maps of the underground network had been sprawling and confused, he reduced the lines to a lucid pattern imbued with geometric clarity. As such it has endured since it was first used in 1933 and has been celebrated as an aesthetic as well as a practical diagram; it is a masterpiece of formal fluency which, for travellers and visitors from all over the world, provides a consummate representation of London. Beck's fee for the entire work was five guineas!

## BUILDING MODERN LONDON

**RICHARD SIEFERT** Undoubtedly the dominant and most influential architect in the history of London after World War II, Richard Siefert had an impressive and controversial career that ran through the 60s and the 70s and beyond. In the





Top: In 1933, Harry Beck simplified the complex tube map, (left), to create the one which we still use today (right). Above: celebrating Hitchcock's centenary. Right: "Nocturne in Blue and Gold: Old Battersea Bridge" by James McNeill Whistler.



course of this, it is estimated that he planned and constructed some 400 buildings within the city. The scope and quality of his achievement have been open to question, but there can be no doubt that with such buildings as Centrepoint by Tottenham Court Road and the former Times newspaper building on Gray's Inn Road, his productivity, if not his style, rivals that of Sir Christopher Wren. The appearance and texture of London still owe much to his vision.

## AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION

**JAMES McNEILL WHISTLER** The debt which London owes to Whistler is immense, since it was he who made the city beautiful. Other artists had come to London from the middle of the 19th century, among them Monet, but in paintings such as *The Thames* and *Nocturne in Blue and Gold* Whistler effortlessly evoked the mystery of London and its river. He depicted the effect of mist, and distance, and riverine lights, to conjure up a vision of the city which is picturesque and melancholy in equal measure. Baudelaire said of his paintings that they embodied "the profound and complex poetry of a vast capital" and, in a sense, Whistler actually created that romantic notion of London which survives to this day. He can be saluted as one of the capital's most important chroniclers.

## MUSIC HALL STAR

**MARIE LLOYD** Perhaps the greatest of all Cockney artists, Marie Lloyd was born in London and, in her heart, never left it. Such was her instinctive genius that she helped to create the image of the

Cockney which is still found in books, films, and television soap operas. Her first great popular success, *The Boy I Love is Up in the Gallery*, was followed by *My Old Man Said Follow the Van* and *I'm One of the Ruins that Cromwell Knocked Abaht a Bit*, and by the middle of her career she was universally recognised as the transcendent star of London music halls. She possessed an intense class consciousness and identified with all the pains and privations of her working-class audience. But in turning their lives into comedy, and thus into art, she allowed them to forget their miseries for the duration of her performance. She was also the great exponent of ribaldry and sexual innuendo, so that she became in all respects the characteristic and quintessential Londoner.

## SOCIAL REFORM

**CHARLES BOOTH** The first volume of *Life and Labour of the People in London* appeared in 1892 and was the progenitor of modern social and sociological enquiry. Charles Booth's treatise was concerned with

the inhabitants of the East End but, over the next 17 years, he conducted his research into the causes and conditions of poverty all over London. Previous enquirers, such as Henry Mayhew, had largely based their work upon individual interviews, but Booth was the first investigator to try to classify the areas of poverty within the city. He wrote in a sympathetic but unsentimental manner about the poor whom he encountered, but his creation of a "poverty map" and his intellectual analysis of the problems of impoverishment led directly to social legislation at the beginning of the following century. He was the first to identify the urban poor in social and economic terms and, as a result, the first effectively to ameliorate their conditions in a general and legislative fashion. He ought to be remembered as a great London reformer.

## ON THE BIG SCREEN

**ALFRED HITCHCOCK** Like Charlie Chaplin, Hitchcock disseminated an essentially Cockney vision around the world and therefore makes it into my urban dozen. He was born in Leytonstone in the East End and never forgot his past. In films as various and dissimilar as *The Lodger* and *Frenzy*, he created an image of London which has caught and held the attention of cinema audiences but, perhaps more importantly, the components of his sensibility are those of the city. He was interested in life as theatre and revelled in that strange land where laughter and terror meet; in that sense, he is the true heir of Elizabethan dramatists. He was not afraid of melodrama, nor was he averse to powerfully sensational effects; the origins of his

work can be seen in the Gothic patent theatres and "penny gaffs" of the city. For these reasons, I place Alfred Hitchcock in the great line of Cockney visionaries. The boy from the East End became, in the phrase of recent newspaper tributes, a "cinematic legend".

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

**CHARLES TYSON YERKES** A notable, if comparatively unknown, contributor to contemporary London life, Charles Tyson Yerkes created, almost single-handedly, the modern network of the underground railway. He was an American financier who, in 1900, having made spectacular profits on Chicago transport, turned his attention to the vagaries of the small and incomplete London tube system. He bought the District Railway and proceeded to electrify it by building his own power station at Lot's Road in Chelsea. He successfully exploited the method of "deep level" tunnel construction and, at the same time, created the Piccadilly and Northern Lines. He also superintended the growth of the Central and Bakerloo Lines before his death in 1905. No other man in the history of the city has done so much to create a viable transport system. London Underground is a permanent memorial to his energy and foresight.

## SHAPING POST-WAR LONDON

**PATRICK ABERCROMBIE** The shaping of the post-war topography of London can be credited to Sir Patrick Abercrombie. His celebrated reports, *County of London Plan* and *Greater London Plan*, published in 1943-44, established the principles of urban decentralisation which were instituted after World War II. His proposals for new or "satellite" towns beyond the urban conurbations, as well as his revolutionary scheme for the Green Belt to prevent the further expansion of London into the countryside, gained general consent. In addition, his plans for the redevelopment of inner London, with the "zoning" of houses and open spaces, were also quickly accepted. His vision of London, in a city where other notable plans and planners have been disparaged or rejected, has surprisingly endured.

## TALES OF THE CITY

**CHARLES DICKENS** The imagination of Charles Dickens first gave mid-19th century London life. No-one had quite seen the great metropolis as it was, until he threw into relief its true and salient characteristics. He described its streets, its shops and houses, in such detail that Victorian London has become identified with the way it appears in his novels. He also had an ameliorative effect upon the conditions within the city. He called attention to the abuses of children and women in the capital; he remonstrated against the provisions of the Poor Law and opened the eyes of his generation to the poverty in which so many Londoners lived. But he also recreated London in the image of eternity; he was one of a long line of Cockney visionaries who saw within the city a symbolic picture of human life and human consciousness. In his writing London became a microcosm of the world.

**PETER ACKROYD** was born, and still lives in London. His most recent novel is *The Plato Papers*, and he is currently working on a biography of London.





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# Tunnel Vision

The idea of a fixed link between Britain and France was first mooted by the *ILN* a century and a half ago. As proposals to build a second tunnel progress, Alasdair Riley asks why the concept of joining England and France has long fascinated this journal's readers.

When the Channel Tunnel opened in 1994, there were several friendly ghosts, both French and British, among those raising a glass of champagne to wish it well in the future, and congratulate those who had turned such an extraordinary engineering project into reality. Still, there might have been a tinge of regret among ghostly spectres who wished the glory had been theirs. After all, the idea of a fixed link between the two countries had been seriously mooted for a century and a half, and dreamed (if not for much longer than) that.

In fact, the notion of uniting the two nations either above or below the sea was much older than the railway system which the cross-Channel link was eventually designed to serve. In the stage-coach days at the dawn of the 19th century, French mining engineer Albert Mathieu-Favier suggested two tunnels, one above the other, the uppermost for horse-drawn vehicles and the one beneath to cope with water seepage. As he sat at his drawing-board, he allowed his imagination free rein, progressing an idea which would find favour with today's tourism developers: an international city on a man-made island in mid-Channel.

Apart from the usual visitor attractions, it was to serve as a staging post to feed, water and change horses. His tunnel was to be lit by oil lamps and ventilated by a series of shafts protruding above the surface.

ROBERTO PIZZOLI/ARTIST'S IMPRESSION



An artist's impression of traffic in the tunnel in 1900—a far cry from the first Eurostar train which shot out in 1994. In 1985, one of the schemes for the tunnel involved a combined road-rail link, above, in which cars and trains travelled in the same tunnel at carefully controlled intervals. The idea of a road link has been recently revived as pressure of traffic on the Channel Tunnel calls for a second fixed link to be built in the next 25 years, when Eurotunnel expects to reach rail capacity. While plans must be submitted by December, Eurotunnel need not commit itself to the scheme until 2010 and need not build it until 2020. But how will a company still deep in debt and not expected to turn a profit for at least another five years attract investment?

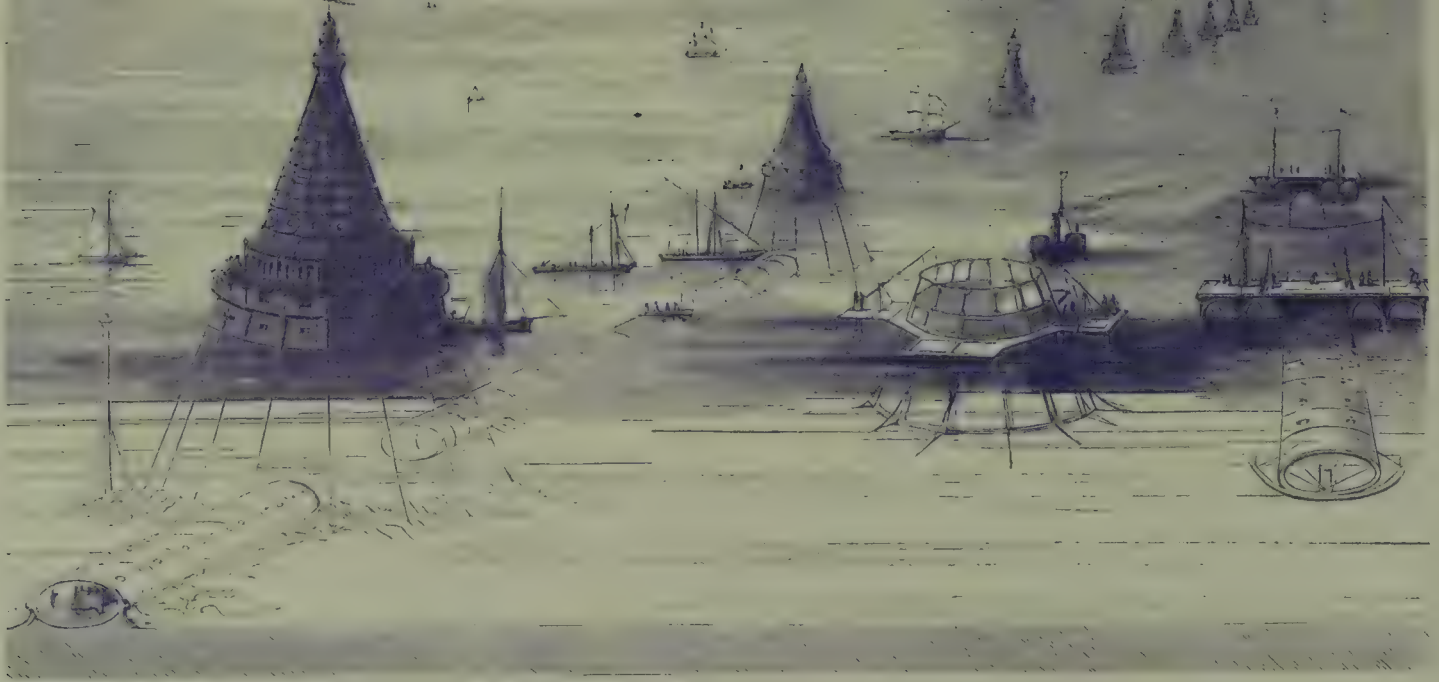
Coming as it did during a lull in the Napoleonic Wars, his plans, which at first were received with enthusiasm, were shelved when hostilities were resumed and Napoleon had more important distractions on his mind. However, at the Peace of Amiens, the French leader and the British statesman Charles Fox agreed that the equestrian tunnel was a good idea—but the idea was never to get beyond the planning stage. If for nothing else, though, Mathieu-Favier deserves a glass to be raised in his honour for forging Anglo-French co-operation for his scheme—no small achievement, given Britain's suspicion of all things French. During the many proposals and negotiations for a fixed link between the two countries this attitude was to be a regular stumbling block.

So, hats off to Albert for doing his bit for international relations. And hats off, too, to his fellow countryman Thomé de Gamond, a young engineer who came up with fresh ideas in the 1830s during the advent of steam trains and the construction of railway networks. For sheer persistence alone, he is worthy of the title of true father of the Channel Tunnel. For over 40 years, he came up with just about every idea imaginable for transporting people from one country to the other without using boats.

He began his great voyage of exploration in 1834 with plans for a submerged tube, an idea he abandoned the following year in favour of building a concrete archway on the seabed. Next came a transporter capable of carrying trains high above the highest waves, but riding on rails along the seabed and powered by the engines which were being carried.

Although many of de Gamond's concepts seem bizarre today, his ideas were original and his research exemplary—and sometimes dangerous. In middle age, he dived into the sea, loaded with weights, and plunged down to a depth of about 100 feet to take rock samples from the bottom. His one complaint after being hauled back into his rowing boat was: "I was attacked by voracious fish which seized me by the legs and arms." Not



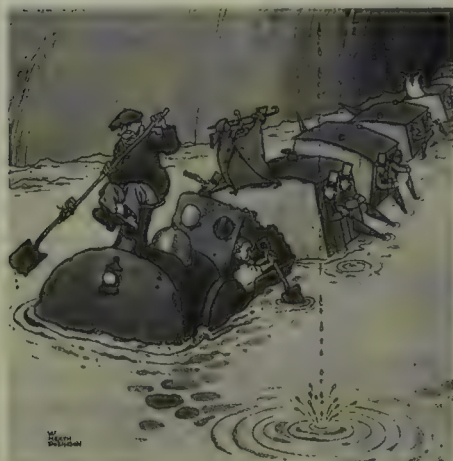
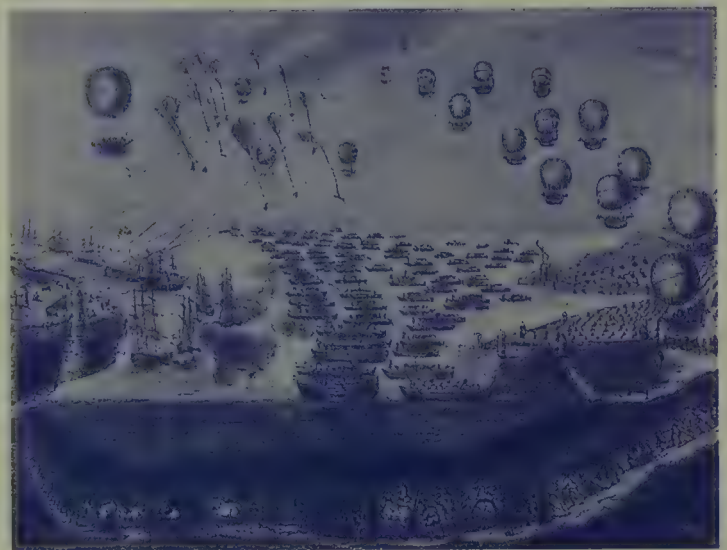


one to be put off by a few bites from conger eels, de Gamond soon applied his fertile imagination to the possibility of a tunnel. His proposals, which he produced in 1856, required the creation of 13 artificial islands in the Channel through which shafts could be sunk and a tunnel driven between them. Neither Napoleon III nor Queen Victoria gave much support to the plan, but it was much more favourably received a decade later by two English mining engineers called William Low and James Brunlees. What appealed to them was that the tunnel was not much longer than the longest existing tunnel in the Welsh mines at the time. During the next decade they worked on a joint scheme for parallel railway tunnels which they presented to Napoleon III in 1867, but progress was halted by the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 and de Gamond's death in 1876.

Still, it was another good example of the Anglo-French co-operation necessary to make such a project work. Even though a fixed link was always likely to be of greater commercial benefit to the British than to the French—because of the far greater area to which the British rail network would be joined—it was the British, with their island fortress mentality, who usually held back. Objections ranged from mild xenophobia and the imminent arrival of a handful of snail-chomping foreigners smelling of garlic and wine, to the fear that a tunnel or other similar structure would be a danger to Britain's defences.

In 1858, Prime Minister Lord Palmerston

*Above, in 1851 Hector Horeau's tunnel was a tube lying on the Channel bed ventilated at intervals by fanciful pavilions. Right, British xenophobia was for years a stumbling block, as shown by this print, published in 1801, depicting a French force attacking under the Channel. Below, W Heath Robinson's perceived perils of sub-Channel travel, circa 1919.*



exclaimed: "What! You pretend to ask us to contribute to a work the object of which is to shorten the distance we already find too short." In 1882, *The Times* thundered: "Once seized by a small force, it would be a duct through which an army of 100,000 men might be drawn in a few days."

The French, though, rarely harboured such objections. At the turn of the 19th century, frustrated by constant British shilly-shallying, they even offered to construct an easily visible viaduct carrying a loop of railway track outside the French cliffs. Should the occasion arise, it could simply be destroyed by the Royal Navy.

Another solution to the defence problem was much more ingenious. The argument was that although a tunnel could be flooded, it could be pumped dry again by the enemy. The idea, therefore, was to implement a massive refrigeration process to create a tunnel whose walls were made of ice. With a frozen tunnel, the refrigeration could be switched off at the first sign of danger, and soon there would be no tunnel at all.

British military objections, however, evaporated after World War I. But flashes of the old paranoia coupled with political indifference and fears of the financial cost continued to surface in Britain and frustrate French enthusiasm. The idea of a fixed link gained fresh impetus when the British Defence Minister announced, in 1955, that he could no longer oppose a fixed link on

military grounds. A Channel Tunnel study group was formed, leading to proposals for two main tunnels and one service tunnel—a scheme which did not differ much from plans welcomed by Napoleon III a century earlier. After lengthy negotiations, the project was officially launched in 1973, only to be shelved a couple of years later by the British on cost grounds.

The idea resurfaced in the early 80s, thanks to the firm political will of Margaret Thatcher and her French counterpart, François Mitterrand. Four serious proposals were submitted by the October 1985 deadline, and the following year they announced together that the Eurotunnel plans for twin tunnels with shuttle trains to carry road vehicles, and a third service tunnel between the two, had been accepted.

In 1750, the citizens of Amiens in northern France, keen to improve cross-Channel trade, held a competition for the best idea to achieve their objective. They awarded the prize to an engineer who proposed a Channel tunnel. His plans were a triumph of imagination over reason, as was the decision of those who awarded the prize. They were ahead of their time. But 250 years later, with the tunnel now a reality, and a proposal for a second fixed link involving both road and rail options due to be presented to British and French governments in December, we can look back and applaud their vision.



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# The On-line Innovators

Stressed? Suffering from information overload? Irritated by technology? Blame it on the Victorians, argues Tom Standage.

In the last decade of the 20th century, a new menace suddenly seems to have arisen: confusion and stress caused by technology. Pick up the telephone and call a large company and you will probably be answered by a machine offering an infuriatingly inflexible list of choices. Computer breakdowns and "information overload" are blamed for increasing tension in the workplace. Even the Pope has weighed in, suggesting that humanity is being sucked into a "maelstrom of data and facts" and warning that the world is now moving so fast that people no longer have time to stop and think about the meaning of life. It is tempting to think that this feeling of being left behind by the acceleration of technology is a unique phenomenon that no previous generation has had to deal with. Tempting, but wrong.

Technological stress is, in fact, nothing new. The first cases arose 150 years ago, caused by an acceleration in the pace of life that was far more disconcerting for the people of the time than today's advances are for us. Today, the chief technological culprit is the Internet; in the 19th century, it was the electric telegraph, its Victorian precursor. The story of the telegraph, and the different reactions it inspired, can teach us a thing or two about our reactions to today's technology.

Before the introduction of the telegraph, messages could only travel as fast as a messenger could carry them. The telegraph, in contrast, enabled messages to be sent across great distances in seconds. From its apparently inauspicious beginnings in 1844, when Samuel Morse first began transmitting messages in dots and dashes between Washington and Baltimore, the telegraph network grew at extraordinary speed. "No schedule of telegraphic lines can now be relied upon for a month in succession," complained one writer in 1848, "as hundreds of miles may be added in that space of time." By 1852, there were 23,000 miles of telegraph wire in the United States alone, and national networks were under construction all over the world. Sending and receiving telegraph messages—quickly dubbed "telegrams"—was soon part of everyday life for many people.

International telegraphy took off as neighbouring countries connected up their national networks, and submarine cables started to criss-cross the world's oceans. During the 1850s, London established itself as the hub of the global communications network, with submarine cables linking

it to the European and North American networks and bringing the far corners of the British Empire within instant reach. By 1874, the global network consisted of over 650,000 miles of wire and 30,000 miles of submarine cable, and 20,000 towns and villages were on-line. Using the telegraph, messages from London to Bombay, which would previously have taken months to deliver, could be sent instantly. "Time itself is telegraphed out of existence," declared *The Daily Telegraph*, a newspaper whose very name had been chosen to give the impression of rapid, up-to-date delivery of news.

Within just a few years, the Victorians had constructed their very own Internet and the world had shrunk further and faster than it ever had before. The telegraph was even referred to as the "highway of thought". The sudden rise of this new technology inspired a range of different reactions.

If you think some people are rather over-enthusiastic about the Internet, for example, it is nothing compared with the hysteria that greeted the completion of the first transatlantic telegraph cable in August 1858. There were hundred-gun salutes in Boston and New York and church bells rang. Queen Victoria exchanged messages over the cable with President James Buchanan, who described it as "a triumph more glorious, because far more useful to mankind, than was ever won by a conqueror on the field of battle".

Suitably telegraphic biblical references were unearthed by preachers, notably "Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world" (Psalms 19). Books capitalising on the public's interest in all things telegraphic were rushed out. Tiffany's, the New York jewellers, bought the left-over portion of the cable, cut it into four-inch pieces and sold them as souvenirs. Bits of spare cable were also made into commemorative mementoes. The completion of the cable was, in fact, seen as the most momentous event since the discovery of the New World. The New York newspapers of August contained, according to one writer, "hardly anything else than popular demonstrations in honour of the Atlantic Telegraph". Cables brought



ashore in other countries around the world were greeted with similarly rapturous celebrations.

To some people, the benefits of the new technology seemed obvious: here was a way to solve the world's problems. Just as the Internet has been embraced as a force for world peace in recent years, people believed that the establishment of an international telegraph network meant there would be no more wars. A popular slogan suggested that the effect of the telegraph would be to "make muskets into candlesticks", and one advocate declared that "it is impossible that old prejudices and hostilities should longer exist, while such an instrument has been created for the exchange of thought between all the nations of the earth".

Businesses were enthusiastic adopters of the new technology. In combination with the railways, which could move goods quickly, the rapid supply of information transformed the way business was done. Suddenly, the price of goods and the speed with which they could be delivered became more important than their geographical location. Business journalist J D B Bow noted "the almost incredible advantages which our business men derive from the use of the telegraph. Operations are made in one day with its aid, by repeated communications, which could not be done in four weeks by mail—enabling them to make purchases and sales which otherwise would be of no benefit to them, in consequence of the length of time consumed in negotiations".

But not everyone was convinced of the benefits of the telegraph. Indeed, some people saw it as an unmitigated evil. It was criticised—as the Internet is now—for encouraging a dangerous over-dependence in its users. Surely it would be folly to become too reliant on the telegraph, warned some sceptics, because of the danger that someone might cut the wires?

Others worried that the whole business was too much like black magic. Samuel Morse organised on-line chess matches between

Left, just like new technology today, these telegraph operators, in 1871, provided a speed of communication hitherto undreamt of. Above, celebrating the laying of the Atlantic telegraph cable at New York City Hall, 1858.



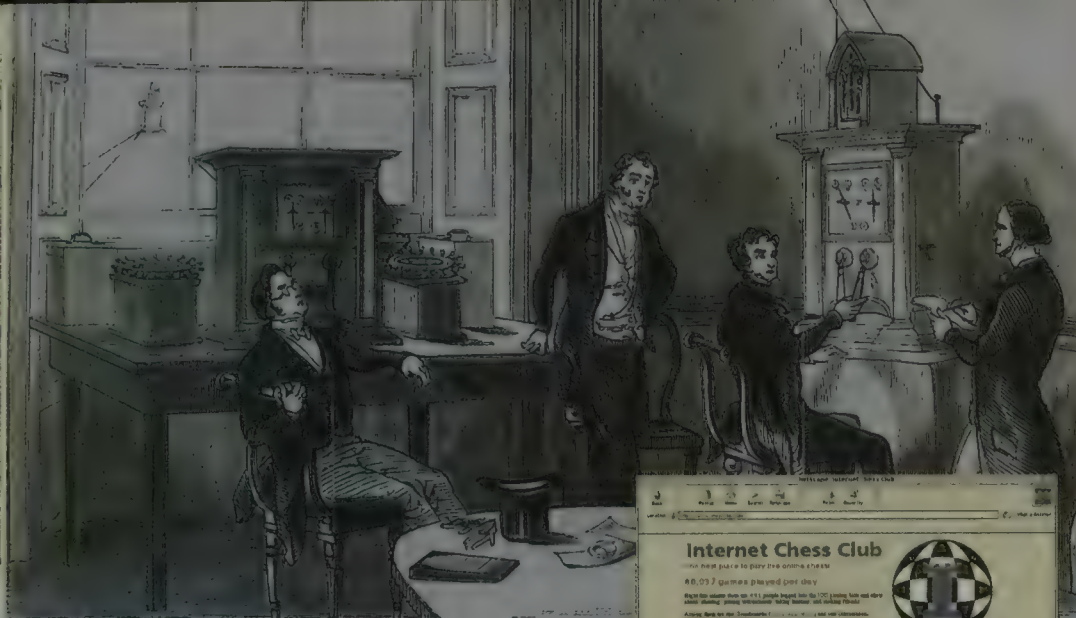
Washington and Baltimore to demonstrate the potential of this invention, but had to put a stop to them after protests from religious leaders. (Telegraphic chess was also played in Britain, using the needle-telegraph invented by William Cooke and Sir Charles Wheatstone, without incident.) Yet another criticism of the telegraph was that its wires were interfering with the weather.

Unexpected legal problems also arose. The new technology was developing too fast for lawmakers to keep up, and criminals and pranksters found unintended and ingenious uses for it. One man was arrested in London for attempting to bribe a telegraph operator to delay the transmission of racing results so that he could place bets on the winning horses. But when he was brought to court, the only telegraph-related law he could be charged under related to damaging telegraphic apparatus, which he clearly had not done. Altering, delaying or disclosing the contents of a telegram was made illegal soon afterwards. On another occasion a telegram purporting to come from Sala, a famous *Daily Telegraph* reporter, claimed that a Drury Lane pantomime had been a flop. When the theatre owners read the report in a newspaper, they accused Sala of libel. He denied authorship, and the case was eventually settled out of court, since the identity of the sender of the telegram could not be proven.

Another criticism of the telegraph was that it had some curious social side-effects. Today's Internet users are familiar with the idea of an on-line community, whose members feel more able to relate to each other on-screen than to people they encounter in real life. Similarly, in Victorian times, telegraph operators often preferred telegraphic contact to interacting with those around them. Thomas Stevens, a British telegraph operator stationed in Persia, shunned the local community in favour of telegraphic interaction with other Britons. "How companionable it was, that bit of civilisation in a barbarous country," he wrote of his telegraphic friends.

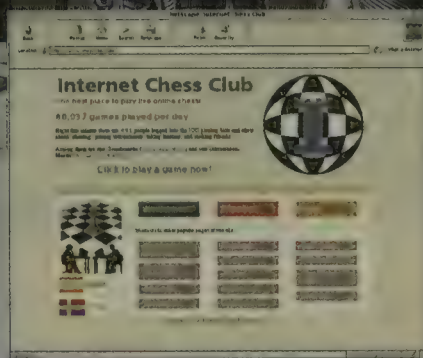
Since a large proportion of telegraph operators were women, there were inevitably on-line





## ON-LINE CHESS

A game of chess played between London and Portsmouth over the telegraph in 1845 showed the potential of the technology. Today, it is possible to play live on-line chess on the Internet.



romances and even on-line weddings between operators, with several marriages conducted as "telegraphic ceremonies". While generally frowned upon, such weddings were deemed more acceptable within the telegraphic profession. On one occasion in 1876 an on-line wedding was "attended" by dozens of operators who listened over the wires. In another case the groom was in England and his bride in America, and there was much criticism of this "telegraphic farce of wedlock".

Enthusiasm and scepticism aside, however, by far the most common reaction to the new technology was confusion and bewilderment. Almost nobody, for example, understood how the telegraph actually worked. Some people thought the messages travelled along hollow wires on rolled-up slips of paper. A common misconception was that messages could be heard passing by as they were transmitted along the wires. Others believed that telegraph wires were actually tightropes used by messenger-boys on bicycles.

In one case a man came into a telegraph office in Maine, filled in a telegraph form, and asked for his message to be sent immediately. The telegraph operator tapped it out in Morse to send it up the line, and then spiked the form on the "sent" hook. Seeing the paper on the hook, the man assumed that it had yet to be transmitted. After waiting a few minutes he asked the telegrapher: "Aren't you going to send that dispatch?" The operator explained that he already had. "No, you haven't," said the man, "there it is now on the hook." And then there was the woman who went to a telegraph office in Karlsruhe in 1870 with a dish full of sauerkraut, which she asked to have telegraphed to her son, who was a soldier fighting in the war between Prussia and France. The operator had great difficulty convincing her that the telegraph was not capable of

transmitting objects. But the woman insisted that she had heard of soldiers being ordered to the front by telegraph: "How could so many soldiers have been sent to France by telegraph?" she asked.

Bemused businessmen too, despite starting out as keen advocates of the new technology, got more than they bargained for from the telegraph. The demand for frequently updated information led to the development of stock tickers and news wires, which spewed out constantly-updated information in a continuous flow. While this enabled people to keep track of overseas events and distant markets, it also led to an acceleration in the pace of life that has continued ever since, and caused exactly the same kind of technological stress that so many people complain of today.

W E Dodge, a New York merchant, highlighted the drawbacks of the new technology in a speech in 1868, less than 25 years after Morse had first introduced the telegraph. "I am not prepared to say that it has proved to be an unmixed blessing," he said, explaining that before the telegraph, New York merchants dealing in international commerce received updates from their foreign associates once or twice a month, though the

information obtained in this way was usually several weeks old by the time it arrived. Those involved in national trade would be visited by their country customers twice a year on their semi-annual visits to the city, and would spend the summer and winter resting, looking over accounts and making plans for the future. "Comparatively, they had an easy time," said Dodge.

"But now all this is changed, and there are doubts whether the telegraph has been so good a friend to the merchant as many have supposed. Now, reports of the principal markets of the world are published every day, and our customers are continually posted by telegram. Instead of making a few large shipments in a year, the merchant must keep up constant action, multiplying his business over and over again. The merchant goes home after a day of hard work and excitement to a late dinner, trying amid the family circle to forget business, when he is interrupted by a telegram from London, directing, perhaps, the purchase in San Francisco of 20,000 barrels of flour, and the poor man must dispatch his dinner as hurriedly as possible in order to send off his message to California. The businessman of the present day must be continually on the jump, the slow express train will not answer his purpose, and the poor merchant has no other way in which to work to secure a living for his family. He must use the telegraph."

All of which explodes the myth that the changes now being wrought by modern technologies are without precedent. Clearly, modern reactions to the Internet—scepticism, confusion, fear of information overload, changes in social mores, and new forms of crime—mirror precisely the fear and misunderstanding inspired by the telegraph.

Similarly, the words of one Victorian journalist, writing at the dawn of the 20th century, sound a note of technological wonder that reverberates today: "We have said goodbye to the hundred years that have given us the locomotive, the electric telegraph, and the rifle. What wonders lie behind the curtain we face?" He goes on to ponder the high speed at which turn-of-the-century people were living their lives—an uncanny echo of conversations that we hear all too often today.

Yet the truth is that in many ways, the Internet is really just telegraphy with pictures. In other words, what we face today is really only an evolution—rather than a revolution—in technology.

We are merely having to adjust to the most recent improvement in the field of long-distance, near-instantaneous communication. Our Victorian forebears, on the other hand, had to get used to its invention in the first place. Instead of complaining about the rapid pace of change, perhaps we should count ourselves lucky.

**TOM STANDAGE** is science correspondent at *The Economist*, and author of *The Victorian Internet: The Remarkable Story of the Telegraph and the Nineteenth Century's On-line Pioneers* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson).

The "Niagara" laying telegraphic cable between Ireland and Newfoundland in 1857.





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### Out cold

Although the use of ether as an anaesthetic had been discovered in 1842, right, it could do little to alleviate the suffering of troops in the Crimean War, above, where disease was the biggest killer.

### Scrubbing up

By 1909, antiseptic conditions within the operating theatre had become much improved following the pioneering work of Lord Lister in 1865.

### Light therapy

The Finsen lamp, for which its inventor, Niels Finsen, was awarded the Nobel prize in 1903, was widely used in the treatment of smallpox.

# Healing powers

In the mid-19th century the discovery of anaesthetics and antiseptics revolutionised medicine. Dr Thomas Stuttaford chronicles the seismic advances made since then.

A young American surgeon's "Eureka" moment, while sniffing ether in the secrecy of his home, led to his triumphant discovery of anaesthesia. The ability to perform an operation without causing the patient any pain was, without doubt, the first step in modern medicine without which none of the great advances in surgery could have followed.

Dr Crawford Long was still only 26 years old when he made his momentous breakthrough in Georgia—about the same time as the editor of the fledgling *Illustrated London News* was preparing his first edition in 1842 on this side of the Atlantic. The operation the doctor was due to perform the following day was simple enough: the removal of two cysts from a patient's neck. But until then the accepted way of keeping someone still in the operating theatre was a bottle of brandy, a gag and restraints.

The patient, who had a clear memory of howling agony during previous surgery, originally refused treatment. He had not reckoned with the charismatic Dr Long who was one of a number of people with personal experience of liquid ether's ability to induce jollity and relieve tension. The thought, had an added dimension. The doctor had been badly bruised during his session with the bottle the night before—but was

unaware of injuring himself at the time. With his patient insisting he would rather keep his cysts than endure the trauma of surgery, Dr Long played his trump card. Why not try ether? The patient agreed and felt no pain while Dr Long wielded the knife. As the fame of anaesthesia spread, Dr Long could look back and regard this moment as the turning point in his career. He had instigated the first of the two major developments in medicine that were to change its face forever in the last century. It would not be until the 1930s that similarly seismic advances would occur.

Three years later, Dr Long was also the first to administer ether as an anaesthetic to a pregnant mother while delivering her baby, a procedure which revolutionised this fundamental branch of medicine. By removing much of the fear of childbirth, and by enabling doctors to perform comparatively complicated operative deliveries, anaesthesia had far-reaching effects on maternal and child mortality.

The art of anaesthesia soon arrived on these shores. But even though its advantages were obvious, there was some reluctance to accept it, not only from bishops and medical backwoodsmen, but from others who considered that anaesthesia was altogether too American. For many years, it was known in the best British

medical circles as the "Yankee Dodge". Doubts were expressed when Queen Victoria opted for chloroform, another anaesthetic, during the birth of Prince Leopold in 1853. Describing its effects as soothing, quieting and delightful beyond measure, she played a large part in making anaesthesia respectable.

It became a valuable tool in the obstetrician's repertoire, enabling them to avoid much maternal distress, illness and even death. Countless babies, who would otherwise have died, have lived. And now that local anaesthesia in obstetrics has improved so dramatically, those women lucky enough to be under the care of a first-class anaesthetist can have a totally painless delivery and still be able to move their limbs.

About the same time as the introduction of anaesthesia, another great advance in medical practice was taking place. This was antisepsis which was pioneered and popularised by Joseph, Lord Lister. He advocated not only antiseptic régimes in operating theatres and wards, but the need for cleanliness generally, including the time-honoured ritual of surgeons scrubbing up, which is still as important today as it was 100 years ago.

Lord Lister, in common with other international medical authorities, was fully aware of the work of the French chemist Pasteur and Ignaz

### Magic bullets

Sir Alexander Fleming discovered penicillin in 1928, but it was not until the 40s that the antibiotic really took off. These drugs are specific to a particular disease, speeding like "magic bullets" to the cause of the problem.



### The seeing eye

In the latter half of the 20th century, innovations such as the CT scanner, using an ultra-thin X-ray beam to take pictures from every angle around the head, have revolutionised the diagnosis of brain disease.

### Through the keyhole

At the end of the 20th century, keyhole surgery is the latest development. Using a laser, a tiny camera and a video screen, operations are carried out through an incision less than 2.5cm long.

Philipp Semmelweis, a former Hungarian lawyer who moved to Vienna to study medicine. Semmelweis soon became famous for his introduction, in 1848, of a strict code of cleanliness in labour and lying-in wards.

He realised that women and their babies died particularly badly if the doctor moved straight from the post-mortem room to the labour ward. He also noticed that the post-mortem appearance of patients who had died from sepsis was very similar to that of those who died soon after childbirth. With cleanliness, the maternal and neonatal death rate was cut dramatically.

Before such men as Pasteur and Semmelweis, the death rate from pre- and post-operative infection, caused by bacteria which contaminated most wounds at the time, was horrific. Operating theatres, where the surgeon's badge of pride was an apron stiffened by patients' blood and pus, were as dangerous as labour wards. Even recently, the showy surgeon would make a point of talking to anxious relatives with his gown still bespattered with their loved one's blood.

Between 1842 and 1935, advances in public health, based on improved housing, cleanliness and sanitation, were considerable. However, after the introduction of anaesthesia and antiseptic operations, there was little therapeutic innovation. Physicians became more and more

important in society. Thanks to advances in pre-clinical science, they were increasingly knowledgeable about the workings of their patients' bodies. But, until the pharmaceutical revolution heralded by the introduction of sulphonamides—the forerunner to antibiotics—they were no more useful to their patients than their great-grandfathers had been.

Physicians, revered by their patients and even ennobled by them if their patients were royal, were unable to do more than make a diagnosis, be kind, and inspire them with totally unjustified confidence. While physicians hummed and hawed uselessly by the bedside, it was fate and the patient's constitution rather than the doctor's skill which decided who should live and who should die. Meanwhile, surgeons could take time over operations and the abdominal cavity could be opened. Diseases such as gallstones, and appendicitis, from which King Edward VII recovered, were eminently treatable.

One of the greatest changes in medicine in the past 50 years has been in psychiatry. Until then,

most people with psychiatric troubles were treated in a way which had not changed for centuries. Admittedly, there was pioneering movement in the early-19th century, characterised by the Retreat asylum in northern England, to treat psychiatric patients more humanely. In general, though, admission to a mental hospital was a life sentence. Most great Victorian mental hospitals, hidden behind high walls and dense laurel shrubs, were established in the mid-19th century. Their grand façades hid dreary, enclosed wards which soon became the dumping ground for patients whom society found troublesome.

Nothing worthwhile could be done for depressive illnesses, mania and hypomania or schizophrenia. There were no safe tranquillisers.





and the idea that there was any treatment that could alleviate Alzheimer's disease would have astounded doctors even 15 years ago.

The change in the treatment of psychiatric disease over the past half century is not the result of any great crusade, but stems from serendipitous observations by astute pharmaceutical researchers. The mental hospital population has fallen since its peak in the mid-1950s. People are now treated at home; old asylums have been emptied and their luxuriant Victorian gardens filled with executive houses.

Because they are appreciably safer and equally effective, a new group of drugs, of which the best known is Prozac, have largely replaced earlier anti-depressant drugs over the past 10 years. Similarly, the over-exuberant patient suffering from hypomania or mania can live a comparatively normal life, thanks to Lithium or carbamazepine.

Just as the depressed patient can be helped with anti-depressants, the life of the schizophrenic can also be transformed. The days have gone since the only treatment was restraint and heavy sedation. The last 10 years have seen the emergence of a new group of anti-psychotic medicines, the atypical anti-psychotics which are very much freer of side-effects. In some cases, they treat schizophrenia which has previously proved resistant to other drugs. And the drugs which save so many seriously disturbed patients from hospitalisation can also transform the existence of those whose emotional or psychological problems undermine their well-being.

What happened in psychiatry is mirrored in general medicine. From 1935 onwards, one great advance after another stemmed from revolutionary pharmaceutical research. By 1955, the humble patient treated by a general practitioner had a

better prognosis than a great public figure, looked after by the President of the Royal College of Physicians, would have had 20 years earlier.

Even so, new problems have come along to replace some of the old fears. The spread of HIV through modern travel and a changing moral climate is mainly confined to high-risk groups in Britain, but is predominantly a heterosexual disease in the rest of the world. It undermines the economy in some sub-Saharan countries and causes devastation in the Indian sub-continent and the Far East.

Malaria, once conquered by spraying mosquito breeding grounds, is a health hazard once again as resistance to insecticides increases and the parasite beats one new drug after another. It drives the cost of treatment beyond the pockets of those who need it most.

It is not all gloom and doom, though. Overall health, especially when measured in terms of life-expectancy, con-

tinues to improve, while degenerative and malignant diseases account for an increasing proportion of the death rate. The battle against breast, bowel, lung and prostate tumours has still to be won, but results are improving.

People today might suffer fewer traditional diseases but are not always as in tune with their environment as their ancestors were. Life may have been spartan and hazardous then, but it was slower and in harmony with the seasons. To what extent allergies, asthma, irritable bowel syndrome and the diseases of civilisation—type 11 diabetes, high blood pressure and other cardiovascular troubles—can be attributed to central heating, tobacco, too little exercise and too much rich food, remains to be determined.

The foundation of *The Illustrated London News*, coincided, by pure chance, with the advent

From 1935  
onwards, one  
great advance  
after another  
stemmed from  
revolutionary  
pharmaceutical  
research.



ZIGY KALUZNY/TONY STONE IMAGES

*In the mid-19th century, the mentally ill were incarcerated in large lunatic asylums, top. With the development of modern drugs, today's psychiatric patients can live in society, above.*

of modern medicine. We, the physicians, psychiatrists and general practitioners, no longer hum and haw by the bedside. Instead, like the surgeons in the first half of this century, we are privileged to cure patients.

**DR THOMAS STUTTAFORD** is *The Times*' Medical Columnist. His latest book is *In Your Right Mind* (Faber, £9.99).



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# Art Attacks

Throughout the 20th century exhibitions of cutting-edge modern art have evoked apoplectic reactions from the British press and public. Richard Cork reflects on a century of outrage.

ART: THE PIVOTAL MOMENTUM OF THE 20TH CENTURY. THE GRAFTON GALLERY, LONDON

On November 5, 1910, the art critic of *The Times* visited the press view of an event as subversive, in its way, as the Gunpowder Plot three centuries before. Unlike Guy Fawkes' thwarted Parliamentary explosion, though, this exhibition succeeded in its aims. Reeling from the discharge of the paintings assembled at the Grafton Galleries in London, my stunned and angry predecessor declared that the show "begins all over again—and stops where a child would stop...it is the rejection of all that civilisation has done".

Today, the principal artists assembled in this much derided survey are ranked among the

most admired of their time. Roger Fry, the leading critic who selected them, wanted to concentrate on the great triumvirate of painters who dominated avant-garde art after Impressionism. Positioning Manet as their forerunner, he devoted most of the wall-space to an extensive range of canvases by Cézanne, Van Gogh and Gauguin. Their impact amounted to "the Art-Quake of 1910", as Fry's collaborator Desmond MacCarthy described it, explaining that the show aimed at "no gradual infiltration, but—bang! an assault along the whole academic front of art".

Neither Fry nor MacCarthy could have foreseen the astonishing antagonism and

notoriety aroused by their exhibition. During its three-month run, Manet and the Post-Impressionists quickly became the most scandalous art show ever mounted in Britain. It ultimately shaped the sensibilities of an entire generation, prompting Virginia Woolf to make the extravagant claim that "on or about December 1910 human character changed".

But few of the hundreds of visitors who streamed through the Grafton's rooms every day seemed to agree with her. As the exhibition secretary, MacCarthy had to supply a special book where they could write down their apoplectic comments, and newspaper cartoonists were equally uninhibited. H M Bateman's

Right, impressions by cartoonist Frank Reynolds published in *The Illustrated London News* in December 1910 in the light of the public's reactions to the works of art, such as Van Gogh's "Portrait of Dr Gachet", above right, displayed in the Manet and the Post-Impressionists exhibition at the Grafton Galleries.



Some who point the finger of scorn;

Some who are in blank amazement, or stifle the loud guffaw;

Some who look for the wherefore;

Some who are angry;

drawing, titled *Post-Impressions of the Post-Impressionists*, showed a top-hatted gentleman arriving at the exhibition, dapper and dignified, only to totter out with buckled legs, gaping mouth and uncontrollable perspiration.

Why did the British public react as if they had been exposed to some apallingly infectious disease? Part of the answer lies in their ignorance of the art on display. Although the exhibits had mostly been produced a quarter of a century earlier, they seemed to the Grafton's shell-shocked visitors as alien and unexpected as the very latest eruptions in contemporary art. Manet, whose *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* provided the survey with the first of its many

masterpieces, was disturbing enough to eyes unaccustomed to Impressionism. But Van Gogh's vehement distortions, Cézanne's simplified forms and Gauguin's flat, pattern-like colours launched an unprecedented assault on the viewers. The cumulative effect of the 228 images on display amounted to a flagrant denial of everything the visitors valued about art.

Some of the most virulent comments came from senior artists, who felt professionally threatened by the heretical Post-Impressionist innovations. John Singer Sargent, virtuoso connoisseur of polished society portraits, opined of the exhibits that "I am absolutely sceptical as to their having any claim whatever to being

works of art". And Charles Ricketts, having resisted another critic's proto-Fascist suggestion that the pictures should all be burned, argued in favour of their preservation only because they might be useful to "the doctors of the body and the students of the sickness of the soul".

In the light of such inflammatory comments, it seems surprising that the police did not descend on the Grafton, bolt its doors and arrest Fry at once. But the furor succeeded only in magnifying the show's scandalous attraction and sending even larger crowds surging through the gallery's portals. While astounded by what they found there, many



# TEN ARTISTS FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Richard Cork selects the artists to watch out for in the next century.



Gillian Wearing, 1996



Chris Ofili, 1996



Damien Hirst, 1996

Gillian Wearing, left, and her work "Sacha and Mum", above, a 4-minute, 30-second video projection. When Chris Ofili, below left, won the Turner Prize for his work which incorporated elephant dung in its composition, there were howls of outrage, nearly as loud as those heard recently from New York mayor Rudy Giuliani when the painting, right, went on show in the Brooklyn Gallery.



The Bleeding Virgin (May 1997)

visitors would secretly have savoured the illicit frisson of gazing at pictures denounced as "a pornographic show" and linked with sinister symptoms of political unrest. What purported to be an art exhibition was nothing less than a dastardly smokescreen, veiling a threat to the very stability of the British Empire. And Fry found himself shunned as a pariah, even by many of those he had earlier counted as friends. Despite the vilification it aroused, Manet and the Post-Impressionists eventually came to be seen as a landmark event. Britain was at last forced to shed its insular ignorance and confront the radically changing direction of European painting. "There comes a point when the accumulation of an increasing skill in mere representation begins to destroy the expressiveness of the design," argued Fry, explaining how the adventurous artist "begins to try to unload, to simplify the drawing and painting by which natural objects are evoked, in order to recover the lost expressiveness and life". This, in

essence, was the ambition uniting all the diverse artists in the show. And an emergent generation of painters in Britain was decisively impressed by the work they found at the Grafton Galleries. The old guard at the Royal Academy may have denounced it as "nightmare art", but the most enterprising young painters realised that the so-called madness of Post-Impressionism had transformed the possibilities open to them in the new century. Nor was the burgeoning spirit of renewal confined to artists. Fry's friend Clive Bell remembered how "from all over the country came requests for reproductions, lectures and books about modern painting". The shock-waves sent out from the Grafton's seismic upheaval never subsided, and the disturbance it initiated still helps to give contemporary art a provocative energy today. Not that it has ceased to be a target for derisive comments. Knocking modern art, as hard and frequently as possible, has been a national

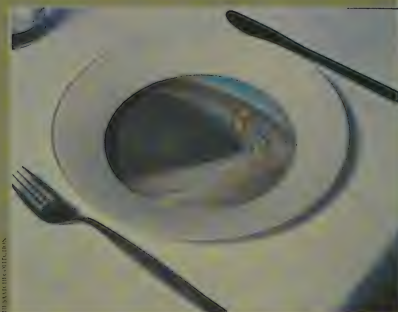
media pastime throughout the 20th century. Tabloid headlines deplore each new supposed outrage in the most inflammatory language, vying with each other to shout the most virulent abuse and dismiss the entire activity of art as a preposterous hoax. Focusing on what artists do, they never ask themselves why. It is enough to wax apoplectic over an unpredictable choice of material, especially at successive Turner Prize exhibitions. The rice used in Yong Phaophan's installation caused as much indignation as the sliced cow and calf in Damien Hirst's infamous *Mother and Child Divided*, suspended in their formaldehyde-filled cases. Many of those who delighted in reviling the Turner Prize shows probably did not even go to the Tate Gallery and see the work on display; let alone ponder the multiple meanings it conveys. Knee-jerk hostility towards anything out of the ordinary decrees that the offending art must simply be condemned, with all speed and indignation.



Pigging For It (1994)

Controversy over new art reached a climax with the advent of the Sensation exhibition in September 1997. Ironically enough, it was staged at the Royal Academy where, for so many decades, reactionary artists continued to rail at the kind of painting Roger Fry had promoted. After World War II, the immensely successful horse painter, Sir Alfred Munnings, used his eminence as President of the Royal Academy to denounce both Picasso and Matisse. His intemperate and vigorously applauded comments at the Royal Academy's annual banquets were similar to the vilification meted out to contemporary artists now. Munnings declared that his targets were irredeemable charlatans. Their work was dismissed out of hand, simply because it did not conform to Munnings' blinkered notions about what a work of art should be. Half a century later, the arrival of Sensation in the same premises caused another storm. The bulk of Charles Saatchi's collection of

young British artists invaded the portals of Burlington House, and howls from outraged Academicians bounced around its walls. By making an hysterical attempt to ban Marcus Harvey's portrait of Myra Hindley, the crustiest Academicians revealed just how ugly their censorious hatred could be. Several of them resigned in protest, and their departure was the Academy's gain. For the opening of Sensation was a welcome sign that the RA had decided, just before the century's end, to atone for its disgraceful, antiquated intolerance in the past. The first room was dominated by Damien Hirst's iconic tiger shark, eerily floating in its misty green tank. Seen from the front, where predatory teeth were bared, it had the looming quality of a nightmare. And many of the other exhibits in Sensation were even more disturbing. Rachel Whiteread's *Ghost* transcended its origins as the cast of a commonplace London living-room. Majestically positioned at the far end of a suite of galleries,



Owen Thorne, 1996



Anselm Kiefer, 1994

this purged and melancholy plaster can already be ranked among the classic British sculptures of the 20th century. Those who protested that Sensation was a "conceptual" conspiracy, hatched by malignant "anti-art" forces, took no account of the painters on view in the exhibition. Chris Ofili, whose extravagant and orgiastic paintings flaunted glitter and map pins among the swirls of oil and acrylic, rested all his paintings on balls of elephant dung. He belongs to a generation unaffected by squeamishness and eager to challenge taboos. Mat Collishaw's cibachrome work, mounted on 15 light boxes, took a colour photograph of a bullet hole and transformed it into a weirdly flaring, exotic image. As for Mona Hatoum, she invited visitors to sit down at a table and then confronted us, on an otherwise empty plate, with a surgical camera's exploration of her mouth, throat and stomach. Tracey Emin was even more willing to indulge in self-exposure, encouraging viewers





Steve McQueen



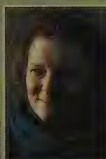
Jane and Louise Wilson



Stae City



Rachel Whiteread



White Elephant, 1998



Jane and Louise Wilson



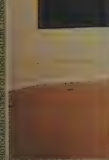
Douglas Gordon



House, Oct 1993-Jan 1994



Jane and Louise Wilson



Douglas Gordon

to crawl inside a tent embroidered with the names of "everyone I have ever slept with". There is nothing discreet or cosily reassuring about new British art. Taking as their springboard a celebrated Goya etching of war's atrocities, Jake and Dinos Chapman produced their own sculptural version peopled with butchered mannequins. It spared visitors nothing in terms of gory mutilation, just as Sarah Lucas' *Bunny* twisted the female body into a grotesquely deformed figure. Obsessed with violation, her art is fuelled by disgust and private pain. Lucas refuses to ignore the least palatable aspects of late-20th-century life, and this is the grim context in which Marcus Harvey's portrait of Myra Hindley should be placed. Far from cynically exploiting her notoriety, Harvey's grave and monumental canvas managed to convey the enormity of the crime she committed. Seen from afar at Sensation, Hindley's face loomed like an inescapable apparition. By the time viewers got close enough to realise that it was

spattered with children's hand-prints, the sense of menace became overwhelming. I can see no reason why such an image should be banned. Some Academicians choose to shy away from the most alarming aspects of contemporary life, but many of the artists in Sensation were prepared to confront them. Their right to do so must be defended as vigorously as possible, just as the attempt to suppress them should be resisted and deplored. The upheaval undergone by modern art, from Roger Fry's period to our own time, is an authentic reflection of larger forces. They have overturned so many assumptions which the previous century took for granted. If artists had ignored the seismic changes of our own era, the work they produced would soon have ossified. We cannot expect the art of today to offer stale panaceas, when the world itself is plunged into so much turbulence and doubt. I expect the best contemporary work to stimulate and catch me off-balance, not act as a sedative. If artists

want to deploy rice rather than pigment, or dispense with bronze in order to spray a reinforced concrete lining inside the empty walls of an East End house, then their right to experiment should be respected. An unconventional material is no guarantee of a powerful outcome, of course. It all depends on the intensity of the artist's imagination, and critics must always be prepared to distinguish between the potent and the meretricious. Sometimes, a painter as penetrating as Francis Bacon can renew the language of art by adhering to brush, canvas and the figurative image. But if a new way of working can produce a sculpture as haunting as Rachel Whiteread's *House*, then its departure from precedent is entirely justified. By turning a private space into a public memorial, by making emptiness take on an eerie solidity, by transforming a home into a sepulchre and finding expressive form for her preoccupation with the past, Whiteread has made an austere

yet melancholy monument that touches all our lives. We may not, initially, realise that *House* is a sculpture or feel willing to regard it as a work of art. But if we are prepared to shed our preconceptions, and acknowledge that the modern artist should be allowed to explore new ways of making, then this memento mori may well move us with its history, gaunt and oddly resilient insistence on the finality of human loss. **RICHARD CORK** is Chief Art Critic of *The Times* and a frequent broadcaster on radio and television. He is author of many award-winning books and is currently working on a history of British sculpture in the 20th century. ■ **Art Made Modern:** Roger Fry's Vision of Art is at the Courthouse Gallery until January 24, 2000. The exhibition coincides with the Tate's major exhibition *The Art of Bloomsbury: Roger Fry, Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant*, until January 30th. (See also feature on Frances Partridge p70, and Exhibition Listings).

Top left, Steve McQueen with "White Elephant", a chrome steel roundabout installed in a pink room. Portrait panel from top left, Rachel Whiteread, mistress of majestic plaster sculptures; Jane and Louise Wilson, purveyors of a bleak vision of 20th century life; Douglas Gordon whose monumental works may be painted directly on to the wall; Damien Hirst, scourge of farm livestock.



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Fashion is a constant search for modernism, its very essence to set new trends. Amelia Bloomer's cycle suit shocked America—how, asks Suzy Menkes, can today's designers be equally radical?

# THE SHOCK OF THE NEW



SANTO CROCI/REUTERS/REUTERS/REUTERS

It was only a casual trouser suit—a long tunic and soft pants caught in at the ankles—but the furor was overwhelming. “Detrimental to health and morals,” claimed the medical journal *The Lancet*. “Masculine and disgusting,” announced the satirical magazine *Le Ton*. No wonder poor Amelia Bloomer, an American feminist before they were invented, gave up on her early version of the track suit. She had originally created it in 1851 for her favourite sport of bicycling and as a proposal for “rational” women’s dress.

Flying the fashion flag for modernism is a lonely business. But over the last 150 years, Mrs Bloomer’s battle has been won. An outfit greeted with horror, disgust and disapproval in its embryonic form, can now be seen on anyone from disco-ing teenagers to travelling grannies. That is typical of the way that innovation works in clothing. What is originally denounced and derided almost always becomes accepted as everyday wear. To be ahead of a trend is the essence of fashion, so at the turn of the new millennium, designers are obsessed with what is “modern”. Is it some futuristic outfit that flashes lights and is made from a hi-tech fabric? Or is it something functional, cut on aerodynamic lines? Modernism in fashion has had two separate dimensions since the Industrial Revolution of the mid-19th century. On the one hand, the machine took over from the artisan and became fashion’s inspiration. The search for silhouettes that were simpler than the upholstered, fancily decorated crinolines led in the 1920s to “streamlined” fashions, echoing the forms of the new high-speed cars and aeroplanes.

Modernism in fashion has a definite look about it. It tends to come in straight lines and sharp angles—while more conventional periods are drawn in curves. You can trace the new geometry through the Victorian era, when dress reformers pricked the ballooning silhouette of crinoline and bustle which had turned a woman’s traditional rounded shape into a caricature. Whether it was the stern, but healthy, clothes of Dr Gustave Jaeger or the more languorous, classic pleating of Mariano Fortuny, modern lines came as straight as the new tramways. This was true especially in the 1920s, when all the avant-garde influences in art, from Picasso’s cubism through Giacomo Balla’s futurism, were mirrored in the linear, long-waisted, flat-fronted chemise dresses. But for the last 150 years, fashion has also reflected sociological change, especially the progress of women as they freed themselves from male dominance, casting off constricting and laborious clothing.

“Such processes produce dolls not women,” claimed Frances Power Cobbe, an early advocate of education for women and

for freeing them from mental and physical “stays”. So Amelia Bloomer’s trousers—like the short skirts later in the 1920s and again in the 1960s—offered much more than a daring new silhouette that either outlined or actually revealed women’s legs. They were also regarded as sexually subversive.

Fashion modernism in the 1920s was also seen not just as an artistic experiment but as an incitement to lust and a sign of society gone to pot. In 1925, a journalist from *The Weekly Dispatch* asked Lady Walpole to define “What is the Modern Girl?” This was her reply: “She is an insane, insane, Eton-cropped, useless, idle, mannish young woman who smokes doped cigarettes, uses bad language, wears practically no clothes and is an abomination to her fellow creatures.”

*Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose.* For the same words could have been used to criticise the Bright Young Things of the 1960s, when fashion picked up again on the straight line, after the return to feminine full skirts in the post war 1950s. The Swinging Sixties were all about geometrics, with the triangular mini skirt and the angular silhouettes shown by Pierre Cardin, Andre Courrèges and Paco Rabanne. After the hippies had turned their backs on futurism, clothes became flowing and floppy, and the linear shapes appeared again only in the 1990s. Prada, Helmut Lang and Jil Sander are all current examples of designers who keep alive the modernist flame.

But what about the shock of the new? Now that clothes have been deconstructed (along with once-rigid morals), and see-through dresses hardly cause comment, what can a fashion designer do to be genuinely radical? How about an outfit that is as smart as you are? One that changes colour according to your mood—or the outside temperature? A swimsuit that warns you when the sun’s rays are dangerous? An outfit that covers your body and makes you invisible?

All this stuff of science fiction is reality to Susan Handley, head of Research in Fashion and Textiles at London’s Royal College of Art. She believes that by transferring technology that has not yet been used in a textile or fashion context, something genuinely new and modern can be created. “Everything has already been done in terms of cut and silhouette and we are all saturated with references to Balenciaga or even Paco Rabanne,” she says. “Fabric technology is something that doesn’t have references. In the third for the novel, this is the one place left to go.”

Among existing projects are spray-on fibres in a can; embroidery spread with a spray; standard size jackets that can be personally fitted using electrical pulses; and the idea of adapting thermally responsive fabrics sensitive to heat and light for aesthetic effects. Other ideas, originally researched for military

Outfits that rocked a nation: Amelia Bloomer’s cycling costume, far left. The short skirts of the 20s, centre, were seen as a sign of a society gone to pot. The latest in 90s “smart clothes” include a solar panel to power a mobile phone, and devices to receive e-mail.





Below left, at the turn of the century, the hour-glass figure was still very much in vogue. Left, by the 20s, soft, unstructured shapes, such as this Fortuny dress in pleated silk had arrived. For daywear, the straight silhouette with a dropped waist was de rigueur, often in the form of pyjamas, no longer caused eyebrows to be raised.

use, include hi-tech reflective materials that mirror their surroundings and act as an ultra-sophisticated camouflage. In fact, technological developments have been the hidden side of modernism since clothes were first industrialised. The invention of the zip fastener was arguably more significant to fashion than launching short skirts or tight trousers. And a generation brought up on stretch clothes after the Lycra revolution must find it hard to believe that women once accepted the idea that you had to "suffer to be beautiful".

Some of the early synthetic fabrics may have been rather too experimental. Elsa Schiaparelli, the first designer to popularise the zip, also embraced, in the 1930s, modern materials such as cellophane, creating dramatic sheer capes that looked like ice sculptures. But Cecil Beaton relates a hilarious tale of what happened when Diana Vreeland, the legendary American editor, took her "Schiap" dress to the dry cleaners—and was then told that it had evaporated. "Mrs Vreeland, who unbelievably insisted on seeing the remains, was told that there was literally nothing at the bottom of the drum," Beaton wrote in *A Glass of Fashion*.

Inventive or revolutionary materials have followed the same trajectory as modernism. In the 1960s, Paco Rabanne launched his career by making Rhodoid earrings in a bid to democratise fashion. The rigid plastic Rhodoid, made in sheets of bright colours, could be cut into geometric shapes, perforated and joined with metal rings. Rabanne later developed them into clothing and made new fabrics part of his fashion statement. He proudly presented, in 1966, twelve "unwearable dresses in contemporary materials". This early fashion "happening" included dresses in paper and in a chain mail of plastic and reflective discs. "They are

manifesto dresses, just as there are literary manifestos," claimed Rabanne. "By pushing certain experiences to the limit, it is possible to change people's attitudes." The designer used aluminium jersey, extruded plastic and created garments by spraying liquid plastic into a mould. They originally seemed too futuristic to wear, but 30 years on, they seem prophetic and inspirational.

In the 1980s, Gianni Versace picked up the idea of a chain mail of metal mesh, using the new ultra-light titanium that had been developed during research for Concorde. Those Versace dresses have now become classic slinky numbers for Hollywood stars.

The computer is revolutionising fashion, along with many other aspects of life. Not only do computer-enhanced prints look quite different from traditional patterns, but already you can go into Nike Town and have a computer image made of your feet to give your running shoes a precise fit. And Japanese businessmen are lining up to strip down so that their suits can be made to order by a digital scan, instead of a tailor with tape and chalk.

And if you think that there is nothing quite so revolutionary as Amelia Bloomer on her bicycle, try this on for size: a biker jacket in a feather-light, bright orange fabric that keeps you snug on a dank, dark morning; but when the sun is out, keeps you cool and turns a cyber-space blue. A similar thermal-response fabric, has been found to reflect mood swings. Imagine a material that is dull when you are down, but glows brightly when you are excited or sexually aroused. Now that is fashion with a modern, millennial twist.

SUZY MENKES is Fashion Editor of the International Herald Tribune.

The space age couturier of the 60s, Paco Rabanne used plastic shapes joined by metal rings for a modern chain mail, below, an idea picked up 20 years later by Gianni Versace, using ultra-light titanium to create the metallic effect, right.



LEFT: RUTH LEE/REUTERS/GETTY IMAGES; RIGHT: GUY AROCH/REUTERS/GETTY IMAGES



# MEMORIES of BLOOMSBURY

Frances Partridge, the oldest surviving member of the original Bloomsbury group of writers and artists, and one of the century's greatest diarists, talks to Helen Pickles about her extraordinary life.



HELEN PICKLES

Frances Partridge is the oldest surviving member of the original Bloomsbury group of writers and artists (not the only member, she is careful to point out, as there are younger generations of Bloomsburies). She lives alone in Belgravia, and is still writing.

"One thing I regret is that I've not done enough," she says. "I do admire people who try and make things better, people such as Mo Mowlam." With all respect to Mo Mowlam, this is a ludicrously modest remark, yet is typical of this woman who, at 99, is still known for her extraordinary energy and vitality. Frances Partridge marched with the suffragists, was one of the first female students at Cambridge, mixed with the Bloomsbury group, broke moral conventions, and has written and translated numerous books. Even today, editors beg her to write and her reviews and articles are sought after. All her bestselling diaries have been reissued in paperback.

Born on March 15, 1900, Frances Partridge is as old as this century. She is the youngest of six children of Margaret and William Marshall, her father a successful architect living in London's Bedford Square, one of the finest squares in Bloomsbury. "It was a large house full of William Morris wallpapers. We had six servants, which now seems rather wicked, including a nanny, cook and a very pretty Irish parlour maid whom father loved to make blush."

There were 11 years between Frances and Florace, the eldest child who later followed his father in his profession. "Eleanor (the second-youngest) and I were called the little ones." The kitchen maid escorted us to Queen's College day school in the West End, still going today. I remember my first day at school. I was astonished I could read better than the other children. My mother had taught me by the age of three. It's nothing special," she says, with a dismissive wave of the hand, "any child can do it if it's made attractive."

Although their father worked from home, the children were not allowed to disturb him. "I was rather shy of him. He was 60 when I was born. Eleanor and I could only see him after tea. He

would give us each a beautiful architect's pencil so we could draw while he read to us, usually Sir Walter Scott." Artistic and literary, William Marshall was also an accomplished figure skater and tennis player, runner-up in the first Wimbledon Tennis Championships.

Margaret Marshall was an intelligent Irish woman who had a keen sense of social justice, later joining the Labour Party. "I was very, very fond of my mother. She was always busy—reading, writing letters, visiting. She took up women's suffrage. When I was nine, I walked in a procession for Votes for Women. She was a suffragist—not a suffragette, they threw stones at horses—and people like Mrs Fawcett came to stay. I listened to the speeches. I couldn't think why they wanted to vote but I felt women should be equal to men."

Independence of thought was encouraged by Frances' parents. "Our spare time was spent constructively. We were taken to picture galleries by aunts and cousins. In the summer holidays we visited Wales, Cornwall, cathedrals—because of their architecture, not for religious reasons," she adds, "or the Lake District where various uncles lived and we learnt to swim in Derwentwater." They got a car early, when Frances was nine, an Austin. "Naturally we called it Jane," she says dryly, leaving one struggling to make the connection, "which came with a handsome chauffeur. It was while on holiday that, encouraged by her father, Frances wrote her first 'little pieces'."

All the children were encouraged to follow their talents rather than convention. Eleanor trained to be a singer; Julia, known as Judy, went to art school and would go on to marry Lytton Strachey's nephew, Richard Rendel. Ray (Rachel), also an artist, did book illustrations and married the writer David Garnett who was later to prove very influential in Frances' life. Tom won a scholarship to public school and became an academic, lecturing in sociology at the London School of Economics and Cambridge.

Frances persuaded her parents to send her to Bedales, one of the first co-educational boarding schools. Her best friend, Julia Strachey (niece of

Lytton), was already there. "Her letters made the school sound so wonderfully exciting," recalls Frances, her voice still tingling at the memory as though it was yesterday. Frances' speech is soft but clear with barely a tremor, her conversation by turn passionate and pithy, direct and witty. She is enviably fluid, the phrases carefully assembled and edited before being delivered, with scarcely a pause before she answers. Although small and a little stooped with age, she has a certain hauteur and a penetrating gaze that, disconcertingly, is both challenging and coquettish. It was while at Bedales that Frances discovered Bertrand Russell's *The Problems of Philosophy*. "It was too fascinating, it made everything plain and clear." Eager to learn more, she went to Newnham College, Cambridge to study English and moral sciences. "It was very unusual for women to study. There were all sorts of rules: if we had men to tea we were supposed to have a chaperone. I hadn't one, so I invented a woman called Mrs Kenyon," she adds.

Bedales had already introduced Frances to the delights of young men—"I was in love the whole time, I think one actually kissed me"—and dancing. "That was the great thrill of one's life, we were made about the Charleston and tango. It was just after the war and the men were very keen to get hold of girls. They were nice young men who'd had a busy time."

Although Frances was interested in psychology—Freud was just emerging—there were no jobs in this sphere; through her sister, she got a position in the Bloomsbury antiquarian bookshop Birrell and Garnett (just off Gordon Square) run by her brother-in-law, David Garnett. "They were short of someone for their accounts and to help with their foreign language section." The shop was frequented by the Bloomsbury group—Vanessa and Clive Bell, Duncan Grant, Virginia Woolf, amongst others—and Frances felt for their bohemian charms and intellectual passion.

The Bloomsbury group had its origins in Cambridge. Initially an all-male—apart from Vanessa Bell and Virginia Woolf—circle of writers and artists, they were independent-minded, free

Francis Partridge, whose life has spanned the century, is still writing reviews and articles at the age of 99. Right: Frances, aged 29, in the triangular swimming pool at Ham Spray, Wiltshire.



thinkers; seekers of truth; and shunners of convention. At its core was the Memoir Club, whose members met for dinner, usually in a Soho restaurant, followed by animated discussion of memoir papers written and read by two of the group. Membership was by personal invitation.

Frances soon became part of their circle, "I suppose I was friendly and they liked the young," she says modestly—Virginia Woolf was 20 years her senior. She was invited to supper by the Woolfs in Tavistock Place, to weekends at Charleston in Sussex (home of the Bells and Duncan Grant), to dinner with Clive Bell in his Gordon Square flat where fellow guests might include Roger Fry, Bertrand Russell, Vita Sackville-West and Rebecca West, and to Bloomsbury parties "where you didn't give a party, you gave a performance. I thought, these are the people I want to know, they were so interesting and full of fun. It was highly exciting."

"One day, a young, good-looking man came into the bookshop. He had piercing blue eyes which always attracted me." Ralph Partridge, pronounced Raif, was an Oxford graduate who had distinguished himself in the war, achieving the Croix de Guerre, and was working for Virginia Woolf's Hogarth Press. "She (Woolf) liked to try a lot of young men from university. They got very little money, he was a sort of sales rep." He was also a member of the Bloomsbury circle and a close friend and admirer of Lytton Strachey.

Although he was married to the artist Dora Carrington, Frances was irresistibly pulled towards Ralph. "We thought the same way, talked and talked, nothing was concealed. He, like me, had become a pacifist in World War I, something I've never lost." Very soon, Frances was invited down for weekends to Ham Spray House, the home in Wiltshire that Ralph and Lytton Strachey had bought in 1924.

It was, even by today's standards, an unusual ménage. Carrington, as she preferred to be known, doted on Strachey but he was homosexual and in love with Ralph. "Carrington was not in love with Ralph," says Frances. "She married him out of pity, but she loved Lytton Strachey heart and soul." It was during a holiday in Spain, undertaken with Carrington's encouragement, that Ralph and Frances became lovers. "I didn't feel guilty because of her feelings for Lytton. I thought Ralph was worth more than that."

Soon after, the 25-year-old Frances and Ralph started living together in a flat in London's Gordon Square, part of a house owned by Lytton's youngest brother, James. "I knew it was highly irregular but I didn't care. I didn't like conventions. I felt I had to do it," she says. "My love affair with Ralph was very truthful. Nothing terrible happened. My mother was wonderful—she did her best to explain it to the family."

Dora Carrington committed suicide out of despair at the early death of Lytton Strachey in 1932. Frances and Ralph were thus able to marry the following year. They moved to Ham Spray, a late-Georgian house with a glass-covered veranda and glorious views over the Wiltshire Downs. The house was filled with paintings by Carrington, Duncan Grant and Vanessa Bell and drawings by Augustus John and Henry Lamb, many of which now adorn Frances' flat in Belgravia.

These were some of the happiest years of Frances' life. In 1935 their first, and only, son was born, Lytton Burgo, named after Strachey and a

At just nine years of age, Frances Partridge was taken by her mother to walk in a procession for Votes for Women. The procession was led, among others, by Mrs Fawcett (second left), who came to stay at their house in Bedford Square. Frances' family owned an Austin (below), called Jane, enabling them to motor to Cornwall and the Lake District for holidays



character in Anthony Trollope's *Can You Forgive Her?* "Ralph treasured Lytton's friendship. He rejected his homosexuality but loved him in the other sense. Lytton gave him the education he missed in the war."

When Burgo was 10, Frances took her first aeroplane flight, a trip to the Scilly Isles. It was while on that holiday in August 1945 that Japan surrendered, ending World War II. "...the church bells began tolling, and a cracked trumpet hooted out military refrains." Later, she notes in her diary that "everyone is disgruntled by the unwelcome news that both food and clothes rations are to be immediately reduced."

They lived off their writing, Ralph contributing to the *New Statesman* and Frances doing book translations. They also worked together editing the *Greville Diaries*, the writings of a Victorian minister, a 10-year labour of love. Ham Spray House was perpetually filled with music, conversation and discourse—a typical diary entry reads: "Starting with homosexuality and whether one would mind one's child becoming 'queer' and if so why, we went on to free speech and Fascism,"—as a succession of friends came to lunch, dinner or weekend visits. They entertained some of the great creative and intellectual minds of the day, including E M Forster, V S Pritchett, Philip Toynbee, Cyril Connolly and Freddie Ayer. Frances' diary for Easter 1951 notes that Quentin Bell was staying, and Julia (Strachey, Lytton's niece), Anthony Blunt and Ben Nicolson to dinner.

There were lots of walks and games—bowls, poker, badminton—and swimming. "We used to bathe in the stream, then we got keen and had our own pool built, triangular with a high-diving board. Yes, it was quite unusual to have one's own pool then. Unheated? Heavens, yes!" But it was the talk and conversation that attracted visitors. "We couldn't understand people who didn't like arguing," she says with genuine puzzlement.

The happiest years of Frances' life were brought abruptly to an end when Ralph died in 1960 followed, three years later, by their son, Burgo, aged only 28. Recently married and with a young baby, Burgo had an undetected heart complaint. "I've never accepted it, either losing him or Ralph

and being utterly alone at the age of 59. I stopped believing in God when I was 11—I couldn't see any evidence of Him and I still don't. I see a great deal of the devil. But I'm not a pessimist at all. I think there's something absolutely glorious in life."

Frances has lived the rest of her life in Belgravia, writing and travelling. Her flat overflows with books and Bloomsbury paintings, including a portrait of Lytton Strachey by Dora Carrington and two works by Duncan Grant. "The Bloomsbury group really were remarkable people. I think I was a little ahead of my time, but I had to fight for my freedom which people don't today."

"I think the world is in a worse shape now. War has undoubtedly been the 20th century's biggest change—it hasn't solved anything, it has only given temporary relief. I viewed Kosovo with horror. The naivety of thinking if you want people to agree with you, you throw bombs at them."

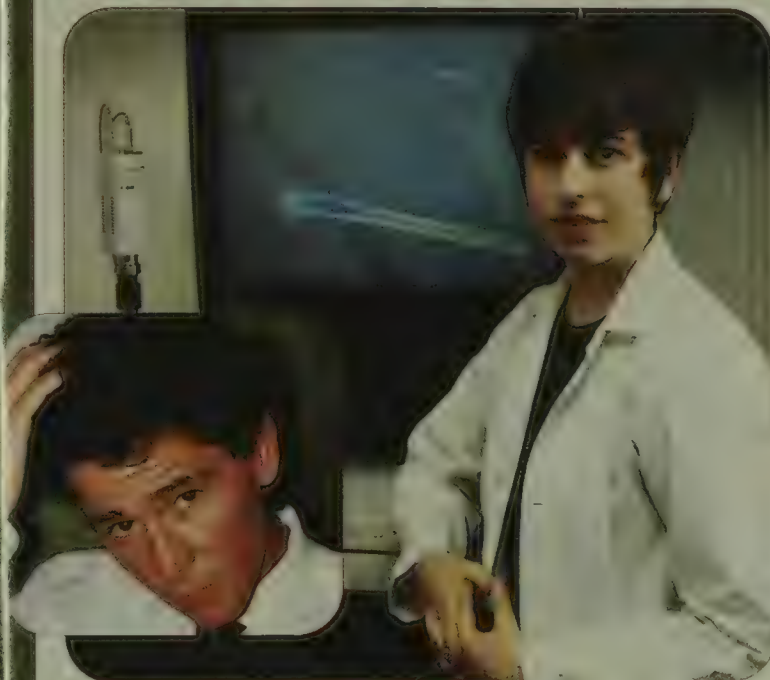
A Labour voter all her life, Frances was thrilled by the 1997 election. "I was very glad to be alive to see young people take charge, giving so much hope—which was very quickly destroyed. I think Blair is a pretty silly fellow. The way he talks through his smile. They say good things but I don't see them doing any," she says sharply.

Ask her which moments in her life gave her the happiest times and Frances is unable to say; there were too many. Death does not frighten her. "I'm just frightened of seeing it coming. I'd be pleased to wake up dead tomorrow because I've had a long, rich life with some ravishing moments." She pauses to deliver one of her challenging looks. "But, of course, that's not going to make the world better for one's grandchildren."

**FRANCES PARTRIDGE'S** *reissued diaries, full of indiscreet gossip, amusing stories and fascinating journeys, are Memories, A Pacifist's War, Hanging On, Other People, Good Company and Everything to Lose. The latest, Life Regained, was published earlier this year by Phoenix, as were all the others.*



# Getting to GRIPS with MALE PATTERN HAIR LOSS



## HIGH SUCCESS RATES FROM NEW PROFESSIONAL TREATMENTS

More men and women are losing their hair than ever before. Stress, hectic living, family history, even pollution, are being blamed for a record number of hair and related scalp disorders. Miracle cures are in demand, but The Belgravia Trichological Group, who own a leading hair clinic in London, is claiming a successful scientific antidote to hair loss of all types. More than 60% of men suffer from male pattern baldness - Androgenic Alopecia.

It starts when the male hormone, Dihydrotestosterone (DHT), attacks the hair follicles which produce Keratin - the hair's natural substance.

The more DHT the body produces, the more destructive it can be to hair growth.

Belgravia's advanced, trichologically formulated natural products which can safely divert the DHT from attacking healthy hair follicles, are now being used world-wide by thousands of men, with spectacular success.

Low Power Laser therapy is also being used successfully at Belgravia's London Hair Clinic to treat other common types of hair loss and scalp problems in both men and women. Stabilising hair loss and even improving or regenerating growth is now an everyday process being carried out by Belgravia Trichologists in London.

## CATCHING THE PROBLEM EARLY

One of the great secrets of combating hair loss is to diagnose and treat the problem early.

Once follicles are dead and baldness is established there is simply no going back, but weak follicles can often be stimulated and treated to support healthy hair growth. So it's a case of the sooner the better.

## CORRECT DIAGNOSIS ESSENTIAL

Hair loss is by no means always a genetic problem. Stress, diet, drugs, poor health, even some shampoos and hair products can cause or worsen scalp problems which sometimes lead to hair loss.

Correct diagnosis is therefore vital. This is why the Belgravia Centre in London carries out inexpensive 'Tricho-Checks' before recommending any course of treatment.

Vanessa Bailey M.I.T. is Senior Consultant Trichologist at the Belgravia Trichological Centre in London, England and Lectures at The Belgravia Academy of Trichological Sciences.

## A DIAGNOSTIC 'TRICHO-CHECK' AT THE BELGRAVIA CENTRE COSTS JUST £10

A 'Tricho-Check' at The Belgravia Centre takes around 20 minutes. It clearly identifies any hair or scalp problem so that appropriate action can be recommended. Belgravia only carries out 'Tricho-Checks' at its London clinic, one of the most modern of its kind in Europe.

## FREE WORLDWIDE POSTAL HAIR ANALYSIS

A special service for those who are unable to visit The Belgravia Centre in person is the 'Trichogram'. Simply send hair samples from the top of the head (including some with the white bulb attached) and Belgravia Centre Trichologists will carry out a microscopic analysis which can tell a great deal about the condition of the hair and scalp.

## APPOINTMENT IN LONDON

Readers of The ILN who are concerned about hair loss or a scalp problem can call The Belgravia Centre at the number below for advice or to make an appointment for a 'Tricho-Check'. The Centre is conveniently situated opposite Victoria Station, London SW1 and is open 7 days a week with 4 late nights until 8.00pm.



52 Grosvenor Gardens,  
London SW1W 0AU,  
England

Tel: +44 (0) 171 730 6666

Fax: +44 (0) 171 730 5250

email: hair@easynet.co.uk



**I**n the year of *The Illustrated London News*' inception, it would have been possible to take two views of the Christian religion's future: either that it was doomed to fizzle out because of the challenges of modern knowledge; or that it, and it alone, could solve the problems posed by the crisis of capitalism to the human race. Now we can see that both views were wrong.

Life was hell for the working classes in those days. The reformers, whether motivated by Christianity—as was Lord Shaftesbury and the other evangelicals—or by the fear of revolution—as were the more secular supporters of the Reform Bill and its subsequent changes in the law—had tried their best to reduce working hours, to spare women and children and, to sanitise the disease-infested slums.

Nevertheless, the sheer grind of life, the difficulty of earning enough to eat and of finding enough space to stretch out and sleep at night, dominated the existence of nearly all the inhabitants of urban Europe in these years. No wonder Marx and Engels believed that the spectre of Communism was haunting Europe. No wonder, when Engels wrote about the conditions of the working classes in 1848 that he believed religion was finished, as far as the people were concerned.

So, when we think of the 19th century as a religious age, one in which more religious books were published than during all the previous 19 centuries of Christianity, one in which chapel and church-building went on apace, and one in which the respectable middle classes read prayers to their servants and children and inscribed their births and deaths in large family Bibles, we should remember that for most people in the cities, "religion is nowhere".

The phrase is that of the first Anglican bishop appointed to overlook the London poor—Bishop Walsham How of Stepney. In the course of the century, many other Christians would try to convert the urban proletariat to their faith and we would do wrong not to remember the heroism of the lives of these missionaries in darkest London, Manchester and Bradford.

The Salvation Army was founded by William Booth in 1865 to bring evangelical doctrine to the poor, and to rescue the homeless and the starving, with a jolly mixture of teetotalism and brass bands. ("Why should the devil have all the best tunes?" Booth famously asked.) The Roman Catholic Cardinal Manning was tireless in his social work. He was the only man trusted by the dockers in 1889 to act as an intermediary in their strike. When he died, the procession following his coffin stretched all the way from Brompton Oratory to Kensal Green cemetery—three uninterrupted miles of working people. And there were comparable funerals for the Anglo-Catholic slum priests such as Father Lowder in the Docklands, and Father Stanton who ministered to the postmen of Holborn. But on the whole, religion remained something for the middle classes. And if that was true in the 19th century, how much truer it has been in the 20th century.

You have to remember, if you are considering the history of Christianity, which started, as the Roman historian Tacitus disdainfully observed, as a religion for women and slaves, that it had declined by the 19th century—in Northern Europe and America at least—into being very largely a religion for the bourgeoisie and above. When the cries came to shake and undermine Christianity—as come they did—they were from the magazine- and periodical-reading classes. Indeed, it was precisely the existence of magazines and periodicals which disseminated unbelief.

In the 18th century, philosophers and coteries of atheism had doubted the Providence or even the existence of God. But their views were kept from the common run of men and women. Only when the *Encyclopédie* of Diderot was disseminated among the bourgeoisie could the revolution catch fire.

In England things were a little different. The bourgeoisie really began reading periodicals after the Napoleonic Wars and they were torn in two different directions. On the one hand they feared that if they embraced unbelief, their society might fall into the same kind of anarchy as had ruined France in the period of the Terror. On the other, they recognised, by means of reading such periodicals as *The Westminster*, *The Edinburgh Review* and the *Fortnightly*, that they had moved into the new age. Whereas previous generations might have had philosophical reasons for doubting the truth of religion, the Victorians had something different: the generation educated by Mr Gradgrind had facts staring them in the face. Sir Charles Lyell published his *Principles of Geology* in 1830-34 but he kept revising and expanding his work as more knowledge came to light about the age and composition of our planet. Robert Chambers made the same sort of knowledge available in his work entitled *Vestiges*, 1844. These books made it abundantly plain that the

THE ANCIENT OF DAYS BY WILLIAM BLAKE (1757-1827) BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON, UK / BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY



# Christianity in CRISIS

Even as we celebrate the 2,000 years since the birth of Christ, the religion founded in his name is waning.

Christianity in Britain, says AN Wilson, is fading fast. In its place, he suggests, the coming millennium will see the rise of another of the world's great religions.



world had not been created in six days some 6,000 years ago. The Bible was not a scientific textbook. Its ancient legends and symbols did not reflect any more the universe which science was beginning to lay bare.

The Bible itself was open to scrutiny in a way which would have seemed profane to earlier generations. From Tübingen in Germany came a critical way of reading the sacred texts which deeply undermined the faith of the Protestants. FC Baur, the leader of this school, established to many people's satisfaction that Christianity had very little to do with the historical Jesus and had been largely the dreamchild of Saint Paul. David Friedrich Strauss' *Life of Jesus* (1835) saw the life of Christ as a myth. It was translated into English by the young English magazine journalist, Mary Ann Evans, known to the next generation as the novelist George Eliot. After these blows to the faith, many members of the middle classes came to feel that religion was itself a hollow sham. By the 1880s, said GK Chesterton, "atheism was the religion of the suburbs".

And I have made no mention of the earth-shattering book which was published in 1859 under the title, *The Origin of Species*. Charles Darwin was a patient, gentle, retiring natural historian. He had no axe to grind on religion when he published his findings, but he could see that they undermined Christianity in quite a new way. For the universe which Darwinism depicts takes away any need to posit a cause behind the evolution of species. When you have accepted Darwin's explanation of how things happen, you have lost any reason to posit a why. That was really how Darwin undermined faith—it was not, as some of his attackers believed, because of the notion of the unique human race, made in God's image and likeness, actually being descended from apes. Many Christians were untroubled by Darwin's discovery. They said that God was in the gradual evolution of species just as he had previously been in the all-at-once creation taught by Genesis.

But Darwinism also appears to controvert Christian morality. Christ taught that the meek shall inherit the earth. Darwin showed that thrusting, fighting, and competing for food and mates are the ways that the species establish their superiority over their weaker rivals. Nature, red in tooth and claw, seems very different from Christ's view that not a sparrow falls to the ground unseen by God's mercy.

You could say then, that the combination of the growth of capitalism, the discoveries of science, and the critical treatment by German scholarship of the Bible had delivered death-blows to Christianity from which it could not recover. You could say it, but it would not, historically speaking, be true. In the middle years of the 20th century, the Russians and the Chinese established atheist empires based, as they supposed, on scientific materialism. It is fascinating to see, in the wake of the collapse of Russian communism, how strong religion has been, what a revival it has made. In Stalin's old temples of atheism, the crowds fill the incense-laden aisles, beating the ground, making the sign of the cross and proclaiming their faith in the Orthodox fashion.

In Western Europe, there have been comparable reactions against the march of science and the concept of progress. The greatest bastion of conservative thought in this regard has been the Roman Catholic Church. The year before Darwin published his theories, a young French peasant girl called Bernadette Soubirous saw visions of the Blessed Virgin in the fields outside the Pyrenean village of Lourdes. To this day, thousands make pilgrimage to the spot where the apparitions occurred, and there are many who believe that the sick are miraculously healed in defiance of all scientific explanation. While Protestantism, both Victorian and 20th century, tended to absorb the liberalism of each succeeding age, and to become indistinguishable from it, Catholicism has been more robust, both in its institutions and in its doctrines, in resisting the incursion of the modern.

Thus, as the 20th century draws to its close, we see all the major Protestant religions in decline, and Catholicism much stronger than any of them. But it is no stronger than it was in or 1842 or 1942. In countries which have traditionally been bastions of conservative Catholic belief such as Portugal or Ireland, Catholics have left the church in droves. Few are willing to commit themselves to a life of celibate priesthood or to accept the teaching that monogamous heterosexual union for life is the only acceptable sexual option. The numerical decline of practising Catholics would appear to be irreversible. Despite what the present Pope has done to defend his faith, it continues to decline. If the trend continues at the present

rate, in 70 years there will be no Christians at all on the face of the planet.

That prophecy is perhaps pessimistic, but we are in a stronger position than our forebears of 1842 to see that Christianity is too difficult, intellectually, to believe, and too hard, morally, to follow, to have much hope these days of a popular appeal in Western Europe. In America, where the hordes of Protestant faithful simply ignore the evangelical precepts to sell all and give to the poor, or to keep only one spouse, Christianity appears to exert a stronger hold. And a populace which readily believes in flying saucers or the resurrection of Elvis Presley has no difficulty in accepting what it is told by the tele-evangelists.

But even in America, the Christian faith is weaker than it once was and it will one day decline yet further. We hear that 90 per cent of Americans claim to be religious, yet less than half that number actually attend church or places of worship. While Europeans have no compunction about admitting to a lack of faith, Americans are comparatively reluctant to do so.

Yet most human beings would still want to echo the words of Immanuel Kant, the great philosopher, when he said that "two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the more often and steadily we reflect upon them: the starry heavens above me, and the moral law within me".

When all the mythologies of religion have been discarded, and when all the legends and false theories of Christianity have been exposed, men and women of a reflective turn of mind will still be convinced that there is underlying the universe a deep moral purpose. Lose sense of this purpose and our

lives become less than that of the beasts. Many people who are unable or unwilling to fathom the intricacies of Kant's mind, nevertheless, feel this to be true.

There is a religion which satisfies the deep human sense of the need for moral code without mythology. It is not Christianity. As the second millennium of Christ's supposed incarnation draws

Catholics have left the church in droves.

If the trend continues at the present

rate, in 70 years there will be no

Christians at all on the face of the planet.

to a close, fewer and fewer practising Christians actually believe that God was three-in-one. What would be the point in trying to persuade themselves that meaningless statements had any truth? They go to church because they do not wish to abandon the practice of prayer, and of communally held faith. But even the Archbishop of Canterbury has admitted that many of his flock do not believe in an actual body rising physically from the tomb; even the Pope has told us the stories of hell and heaven are simply picture-language.

In a different religious tradition, there is no need to trim and change the lore in this manner. The mullahs and imams of Islam preach the same undiluted message which was first given to the world by the Holy Prophet in the sixth and seventh centuries. While the West tries to dub the followers of Islam as "fundamentalist lunatics", the increasing numbers who turn to the teachings of the Koran discover this book and this teaching is what the human race has always craved: a moral and an intellectual acknowledgement of the Lordship of God without the encumbrance of Christian doctrine in which so few can sincerely believe.

Britain's 1.5 million Muslims are already far more numerous than British Jews (285,080) or British Methodists (35,330). Gradually those of Asian origin will intermarry with the indigenous European population. In the new millennium, many families in Britain will consider that the Muslim doctor, dentist, businessman or lawyer is a highly desirable spouse for their son or daughter. These marriages will, like the marriages of Protestants to Catholics, lead to religious conversions. We will soon see large numbers of English middle-class children being brought up as Muslims. The contrast between the Muslim families—hard-working, prosperous and with well-ordered lives based on firm moral principals—and those "modern" post-Christians of no faith, no morality—will be plain for all to see. The fact alone will lead to conversions to Islam, not just for reasons of marriage, but out of profound moral and intellectual conviction.

That is why the dominant religion of the world was, and will continue to be, that proclaimed by the first prophet of Mecca, Mohammed. How amazed the first readers of *The Illustrated London News* in 1842 would be to see their country embracing Islam.

**A N WILSON** has worked on *The Spectator* and the *Evening Standard* as well as being the author of many books, including *A Watch in the Night* (1996) and *Paul: the mind of the apostle* (1997).





# Everyone loves a scandal

**A**s this magazine was born, Benjamin Disraeli was struggling against a whispering campaign which *The Illustrated London News*, respectable from the start, would have been loath to report.

The previous year, at the general election of 1841, anonymous handbills had been plastered across the town of Shrewsbury, a constituency Disraeli had sought as being cheaper than his previous seat of Maidstone as there were fewer voters to bribe. The handbill listed the judgement debts outstanding against Shrewsbury's would-be Tory MP. They totalled over £21,000. The list included the names of unhappy tailors, hosiers, upholsterers, few money lenders ("for this Child of Israel was not satisfied with merely spoiling the Egyptians"), spunging housekeepers, and persons of every denomination who were foolish enough to trust him... "He seeks a place in Parliament merely for the purpose of avoiding the necessity of a Prison, or the benefit of the Insolvent Debtors Act".

The slur about indebtedness was obvious, and true. The remark about "spoiling the Egyptians" was a reference to a notorious grand tour of Europe and the Middle East the young dandy had made in the 1830s during which it was alleged he had dressed in green velvet trousers and ruffles. According to the painter Benjamin Haydon, shocked by his conversation at a dinner party,

Disraeli's behaviour in the Orient "seemed tinged with a disposition to palliate its infamous vices... I meant to ask him if he preferred Aegypt, where Sodomy was preferment, to England, where it very properly was Death".

The reference to "spunging housekeepers" may have alluded to Disraeli's shameless search for a rich widow to marry. He had just found one. She would not have been flattered to read, in a letter of the sort which today would have been sold to the *Daily Mail*: "I am not married, but any old, uply and ill-tempered woman may have me tomorrow". It could equally have been an allusion to his earlier adultery with Mrs. Henrietta Sykes, which by a narrow squeak had never reached the courts.

Politicians have not, in short, changed much. Nor have churchmen. In the mid-19th century, England was in the grip of one of its periodic fits of moronic zeal against the Roman Catholic Church. *The Illustrated London News* was ten years old when the trial of John Henry Newman for criminal libel shocked rational opinion throughout Europe. Probably the most eminent and inspirational figure who has ever converted from the Church of England to Rome, Newman (later a cardinal) was caught in the crossfire of a war of words between Catholicism and Protestantism. A famous convert the other way (from Rome) called Giacinto Achilli had been touring Britain denouncing depravity in the Italian Church. But, unknown to Protestant congregations, Achilli was

a disgraced lecher—Newman said so. Achilli sued.

*The Illustrated London News* noted the trial in restrained prose. In fact, Newman's lawyers had transported to London from across Europe a cartload of debauched or reduced women to testify to the former monk's licence. "Dr Achilli deflowered me," Elena Giustini told the court. "It was in the sacristy." Asked if the monk had given her presents, her reply—"he gave me a silk handkerchief which was older than himself"—was greeted by roars of laughter from the public galleries.

Plainly Newman had told the truth about Achilli. Astonishingly (to those unfamiliar with the militant protestantism of the judge, Lord Campbell) he was convicted of the libel. The public gallery cheered and stamped its feet. Even *The Times* raised an eyebrow. *The Morning Chronicle* was outraged. The young *Illustrated London News*, devoted a mere paragraph to the case, noting that "the libel complained of, charged Dr Achilli with having led a grossly immoral life almost from the period of his becoming a priest some 25 or 26 years ago down to the present time" and going on to conclude "the verdict, therefore, on all the material points is in favour of Dr Achilli".

For what has changed between then and now is not human behaviour: in public life as elsewhere, individuals sin through the ages with reassuring regularity and there is no new scandal under the sun. For those who care to make a report, the material is always there, as plentiful and exotic in 1999



Gossip—always seductive—has spent the past 150 years creeping into print. Matthew Parris explores scandal's steady progression from the boudoir to the front page.

as it was in 1842. What has changed are the newspapers. All press discretion has gone.

Nor is this restraint a question of law. Our laws of defamation have not substantially altered over the period. In 1852, Achilli had to persuade the jury, as he would today, that what Newman had alleged was both defamatory and untrue. And it was true in the 19th century as it remains today, that you needed a small fortune to defend a suit for libel; and a small fortune to risk one. Jonathan Aiken and *The Guardian* know that.

Nor have juries changed: fickle and headstrong, a British jury counts it as its prerogative to take against or in favour of a plaintiff, a defendant, or even the law. A decade ago Mrs Theresa Gorman MP was awarded a king's ransom by a jury who agreed with her that a former constituency officer's criticisms had been libellous. David Ashby MP was less successful. His attempt to secure damages from *The Sunday Times* for drawing what he said were false conclusions from his having shared a bed with a male friend in France ended, four years ago, in expensive failure. Jason Donovan, the actor and pop singer, won a considerable sum against *The Face*, for wrongly suggesting that he was homosexual. On other occasions, public figures have had to make do with a shilling. Newman's judge was sufficiently ashamed of the conviction to limit his damages to £100.

No, juries have hardly altered, human flesh is as weak as ever, and the public just as curious to know.

Only the newspapers have changed. Those allegations against the Tory Disraeli had to be circulated on anonymous handbills in 1841. Today, the *Daily Mirror* would have been glad to trumpet them.

*The Illustrated London News* was seven when George Hudson MP, "the Railway King" was lampooned in *Punch* in 1849 for the sharp accounting upon which his railway empire was built; but the press hardly dared speak until a committee of its shareholders blew the whistle. At a time when railway entrepreneurs were seeking Private Bills in Parliament to lay down their tracks, 155 MPs were directors of railway companies; this cannot have been a coincidence, but the press was restrained in its commentary. Some 120 years later, Reginald Maudling, a Conservative Home Secretary with unwise business links, could not hope for such mercy. Today the faintest whiff of a story linking political power to financial advantage attracts the attention of even the most serious newspapers. They even trap MPs with bogus offers of corrupt backhanders.

In the 1860s, a cheekier and less reliable London publication beat a path which, in the succeeding century, the whole of the British press were to follow. On May 24, 1886, the following story appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, under the headline, Mr Parnell's Suburban Retreat: "Shortly after midnight on Friday evening, Mr Parnell, while driving home, came into collision with a market gardener's cart. During the sitting of Parliament the

In the dock, from left to right, Mrs Simpson, Richard Boothby MP, King Edward VIII, William Gladstone, Oscar Wilde, Benjamin Disraeli, Dr Giacinto Achilli, David Lloyd George and Charles Stewart Parnell.

Hon. Member for Cork usually takes up his residence at Etham, a suburban village in the south-east of London..."

This, as the *Gazette* well knew, was dynamite. The story was only the excuse. From then on the tale of the adulterous affair between the Irish nationalist Charles Stewart Parnell and Kitty, wife of Captain O'Shea MP, was to grow into something which was more than a gossip-sensation: it drove a fatal nail into the coffin of Gladstone's Irish Home Rule Bill. We are still living with the consequences.

Editors' appetites were whetted. Newspapers began taking liberties as the 19th century drew on. They have seldom been sated since. Next to fall (in the same year) was Sir Charles Dilke, a Liberal MP who would probably have become a prime minister if Mrs Virginia Crawford and Fanny Stock, his serving girl, had not alleged what today's *Sun* would call "three-in-a-bed romps". The *Pall Mall Gazette* was more euphemistic. Its editor, WT Stead (who was later to drown on the *Titanic*) anticipated today's middle-market tabloids with his shrewd combination of the sensationalism needed to sell papers, with a self-appointed role as guardian of public morals. Dilke was ruined.



When Oscar Wilde went on trial in 1895, even the mainstream press had lost their inhibitions. *The Daily Telegraph* did much (though not as much as Wilde himself) to destroy the man.

But even at the turn of the last century there remained a vital difference between the role of the press then and now. Then the news media did not make the news: they reported it. The *Pall Mall Gazette*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Illustrated London News* were essentially bystanders. With varying degrees of decorum or impertinence they published what they saw, what they heard and what others told them. They were witnesses to public life, not players in it. They did not hide in wardrobes, employ spy-cameras or incite public figures to report the very activities they then exposed. Their nearest approach was the age-old practice (which survives to this day) of bribing the police to inform.

Compare Wilde's fate with that of Harvey Proctor MP, nearly a century later in 1986. Proctor was convicted of similar crimes to Wilde's: gross indecency, in private, with under-age male prostitutes. Unlike the self-publicist playwright, though, Proctor had not, indeed, he had hardly invited the prostitute "Max" whose evidence convicted him. A Sunday newspaper had paid Max to cultivate Proctor's acquaintance, then to visit him, wired for sound. Max could be heard on tape assuring Proctor that he was over 21, which he was not. Proctor's parliamentary career was finished. So was Lord Lambton's in 1975, when the *Kluge of the World* looked at a cuckolded husband's cine film taken from a bedroom wardrobe, then hid their own equipment in the lady's flat.

A modern Lloyd George's womanising would be exposed by today's tabloids, but the press of his day stayed discreet about the Prime Minister's well-known adulteries—and were shamefully slow to expose his scandalous sale of honours. A modern Horatio Bottomley (the 1920s swindler and populist MP) would have been undone far earlier, though Robert Maxwell illustrates the slovenliness of the press, even today, over "boring" financial scandals. It also exposes their continuing willingness to protect their own. If the Labour MP Tom Driberg had not written the William Hickey gossip column in the *Daily Express*, one wonders whether his incredibly promiscuous life (the Labour Left grew beards, it was said, only to repel his advances) from his election in 1942 to his death in 1976, would have remained, as it did, a secret.

The *Illustrated London News* was 120 when John Profumo and Christine Keeler hit the headlines. When the magazine was born it would have been almost inconceivable that the London press would have regarded news of the quiet philandering of a war minister, as public property—why, even Glad-

stone's obsessive pursuit of street prostitutes was kept from the papers: the sign of a whip in his diary (he scourged himself after these meetings) indicates the frequency; his defence, which was that he only talked to them and only for their own salvation, would have been laughed at by a modern tabloid editor, though it was probably true.

A liberal leader's trial for conspiracy to murder would have been news at any time in the last century and a half. Jeremy Thorpe's trial, decades ago, ended in acquittal, but the story was sensational: a bitter and garrulous former male model, stable-lad and spurned friend, Norman Scott; a letter read out in court—"Bunnies can (& will) go to France. In haste. Yours affectionately, Jeremy"; a car, taking Scott and his dog Rinka to a secluded spot on Exmoor; a shot, a dead dog... no editor, whatever

the era, could ignore this. But Cecil Parkinson would have been treated more kindly in 1982. David Mellor's (falsely alleged) toe-sucking would hardly have been described. Robin Cook's wife's book would never have been published. Foreign Office Minister Ian Harvey's tryst with a guardsman in St James's Park in 1958 would have stayed secret.

News of Bishop Roderick Wright's illegitimate son in Sussex would never have reached the flock in Angell and the Isles. Little that is known stays unpublished today. Perhaps the last two great, widely-whispered but never-

broadcast stories were in the 1930s (until the abdication) Edward and Mrs Simpson, and through the '50s and '60s Lady Dorothy Macmillan's adultery with Robert Boothby. Neither could be kept from the front pages today. But in *The Illustrated London News'* younger days one might know more than one would broadcast. Peter Mandelson's loan from a political friend in purchasing a house would have been regarded as a private matter. The word "lesbian" was never printed, so Maureen Colquhoun, the Labour MP who fell in 1979, would have been safe. And certainly Roger Holmes, vicar of All Saints in Helmsley, Yorkshire, and his mistress, would have been spared the *News of the World's* video equipment in their bedroom in 1997—and the publication to the world of his giggled exclamation: "I'm the knicker vicar of North Yorkshire!"

News? Only today. *Illustrated?* The Victorians wouldn't have dreamed of showing pictures. Yet over the garden fence all these stories would have been splendid gossip at any time. Sin remains constant. Tittle-tattle is as perennial as the grass. What changes is our inclination to print it.

**MATTHEW PARRIS** is the parliamentary sketchwriter for *The Times*, a writer and broadcaster. He has written a number of books, including *Great Parliamentary Scandals—Four Centuries of Calumny, Smear & Innuendo*, published by Robson Books.

# Food through the ages

Clarissa Dickson Wright gives us a taste of British eating habits over the past 150 years.

Cast yourself back a century-and-a-half and imagine yourself with new-found wealth. Adjust your crinoline or loop your watch chain and think about the pleasures of the table. The age in which you live is High Victorian. Gone are the dainty delicacies and exquisite food of the Georgian era. Today's fashion is conspicuous wealth, groaning sideboards and vegetables grown out of season in your state-of-the-art greenhouse. Green peas and new potatoes are the dernier cri. At Christmas you will be expected to present an elegant table for your new neighbours, but don't make the faux pas of serving strong dishes. Keep it bland, so as not to embarrass their untrained palates.

However much money you have, though, it won't necessarily buy you a decent cook. Servants take their status from their owner's title, rank and position, not their wealth. Those available to you are likely to be second-rate and, anyway, you will have had no experience of handling them and have not the faintest idea of how to set about it all. Mrs Beeton is a small child and there is no 19th-century Delia Smith on your bookshelves. Your artisan parents, who existed quite happily on stew, are overawed by your new opulence.

You get the picture. Never has a period of history seen such dramatic changes in the way we eat—how we obtain food, cook it, preserve it and serve it—as the last 150 years. In 1850, Great Britain was the most powerful nation in the world, with trade growing by the minute. The wealthy, land-owning aristocracy was joined by an increasingly prosperous middle-class who, like

Clarissa Dickson Wright stirs up a century of food, from Edwardian opulence to war rationing to, far left, today's picturesque cornucopia.



LEFT: THOMAS MAGNUS; RIGHT: JACQUELINE ROBERTSON





nouveaux riches in every century, liked to flash it about but had little idea how to do so.

There was still a huge social divide, with the poor living in the terrifying conditions so vividly described by Charles Dickens. There were street markets where you could hire a ham bone to boil in your soup pot, paying so much an hour on a descending price scale depending on how much it had been used already. Parliament introduced legislation to protect ash coppices because unscrupulous traders were stripping their leaves, staining them with black lead paint and selling them as tea.

Primitive refrigeration existed in the form of ice houses for the rich and ice chests for the prosperous. The best that the rest could rely on was a north-facing larder with slate slabs. Poultry and fish were best brought home alive, and cattle driven on the hoof to market.

Market gardens proliferated around every large town or city. Canning was in its infancy. The best means of preservation were still salting, drying, pickling or submerging commodities in oil or fat. Cooking was done on "new style" enclosed ranges burning solid fuel. They were notoriously erratic, depending as they did on quality of fuel, direction of the wind and efficiency of the sweep. No wonder cooks took to the gin bottle!

Yet, given all these considerations, the excellence and variety of dishes puts us to shame. Examples include Oyster Loaf—a loaf was part-baked, then hollowed out and filled with three-dozen oysters and the loaf returned to the oven to cook; and Claret Jelly—made from an entire bottle and has the most wonderful smell; Excursion Pie for picnics or breakfast—filled with four grouse or six partridges, plus other types of game.

Apart from posting inns, there were few places to eat out. Ladies would not consider entering restaurants. Such places were reserved for women of the *demi-monde*, doubtless preventing embarrassing encounters between wives and mistresses. As late as 1927, when my mother married, ladies risked their reputation by dining at the Ritz, and even the Savoy was considered risqué at night. City gents had chop houses, and gentlemen's clubs—originally set up as gaming houses—bowed to the new morality. They became respectable and even, in some cases, offered decent food. The Reform Club was a case in point.

Food continued much the same throughout the Victorian age. It only began to change with the Edwardian era when dishes became more sophisticated, dinners even longer and the influence of imported foreign food became felt. Trade links set up by the Great Exhibition, the arrival of new ideas from America and our ties with the Indian Empire all brought in fresh flavours.

The golden summer of the Edwardian age ended literally with a bang when a terrorist's gun

at Sarajevo changed it all forever. World War I affected every aspect of food. Servants were called up or required to work in factories, the stream of exotic food from abroad dried up and, in any event, with men at the front, people naturally lost the impetus for entertaining.

Kitchens were already much more streamlined, and no doubt anyone who had to suffer the horrors of kitchen work without sufficient help, invested as soon as possible in the latest gadgets. Most houses had gas or electricity, but for lighting rather than cooking. There was no rationing as such, merely an absence of plenty due to labour shortages. Meals became much simpler and tea-rooms and corner houses grew as more people

that the prize for the mothers' race at school sports day was a string of onions, she kicked off her high heels, hoicked up her skirt—and won.

We are told how healthy the wartime diet was, but how dull it must have been in most households. What is apparent from wartime recipes is that people tried to replicate traditional dishes with substitute ingredients, never a good idea. One can usually find a much better dish for the substitute by using it in its own right.

So we come to the second half of the century when the purple prose of Elizabeth David taught dreary old Britain to dream of Mediterranean delights. Cheap foreign travel made us more adventurous, an explosion of food writers, and

magazines was dedicated to the subject and television took it to its heart. The nation devoured the books, were entranced by the programmes—and, for the most part, stopped cooking.

Technology has never been better. Or worse, if you include the microwave. We all have heat at the touch of a switch, and gadgets for everything. But instead of good old-fashioned grocers, greengrocers, butchers and fishmongers, and the social intercourse which goes with them, we have soulless supermarkets. Whoever saw a supermarket slipping an old lady an extra slice of free ham? All of us



TESSA TRAUGER

## "The purple prose of Elizabeth David taught dreary old Britain to dream of Mediterranean delights."

went out to work. Then the war was over, but instead of coming home to a land fit for heroes, servicemen found their country undergoing severe economic depression. The rich tried to forget in an orgy of wild music, drugs and sexual freedom fed by dainty morsels such as lobster patties, foie gras and twice-baked soufflés; the poor struggled to survive on what they could scrape together, usually cheap mutton and potatoes. The description of the Jarrow Marchers arriving in the Savoy Hotel dining room, half-starved, foot-sore and frozen, to stare uncomprehendingly at bejewelled diners staring equally uncomprehendingly back at them, forged an image of irreconcilable class hatred for years to come.

The 1920s and 1930s saw a food revival. *Vogue* even started a cookery page written by the French chef Marcel Boulestin, and American cocktails, a product of poor liquor under Prohibition, became all the rage. Restaurants proliferated, Lyons Corner Houses provided a pleasant setting for the lower-middle classes, and fish and chip shops improved the diet of the poor.

Then war closed in again, this time closer to home. Bombing raids brought death to the doorstep and U-boats prevented importation of, not just exotic food, but almost anything. Rationing bit deep into the nation's food supplies. When my sister told our mother, a woman of great elegance,

can go there and buy anything, although most of it is indifferent and sometimes not even safe. Worse, we can buy it ready-cooked. I cannot really understand why today's women, with all their gadgets, regard themselves as so much busier than their grandmothers and achieve so much less in the kitchen. Cheap, ready-made meals and junk food are even worse than cheap mutton and potatoes.

It is not hard to eat well and cheaply. I've been drunk and destitute and managed to do very well with a ham hock and a packet of lentils.

Recently I compiled an anthology of food writing—simply called *Food*—over the 20th century. I have always been a passionate cook and a great reader of food history. So it was enormous fun seeing how people portrayed food during this extraordinary period of history. When I finished the book, I wondered what the next installment in the story of food will be. Sometimes we seem to have got it so right, and at other times so wrong. Will the pendulum turn against GM food and poorly farmed meat? I do care, even though I don't aim to eat it, nor do I shop in supermarkets.

I hope you care, too, because it is up to you, the consumer, where food goes next.

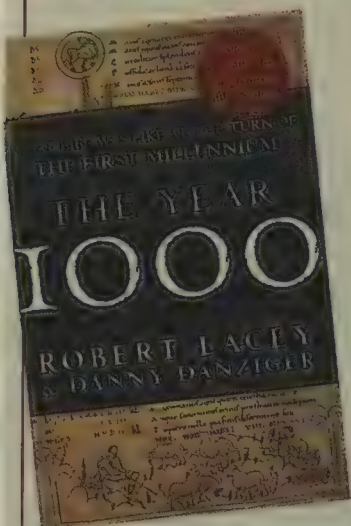
**CLARISSA DICKSON WRIGHT** of *Two Fat Ladies' fame*, has compiled *Food* (Ebury Press, £25).





**The Timechart History of the World** (*The Third Millennium Press, £14.99*). Based on the original 19th-century timechart which depicted the origins of the earth according to the Bible, this is the perfect visual crib for anyone who wants to know what happened—and when—in the world during the past 6,000 years. The folded-up timechart, 30ft-long, can be opened to reveal a chronological sequence of thousands of dates, facts, quotes and illustrations which flow through empires and dynasties covering 40 centuries before Christ and 20 centuries after his birth. It is a treasure trove for people of all ages.

# Millennium Choice



**The Year 1000** by Robert Lacey and Danny Danziger (*Little, Brown, £12.99*). The best-selling evocation of what life was like the last time people faced a new millennium. No spinach, no sugar, no Caesarean operations in which the mother had any chance of survival, but a world which knew brain surgeons and property developers.

The authors interviewed historians and archaeologists to reveal a picture of life very different from our own. They conclude by looking at the human and social ingredients which paved the way for survival in the next 1,000 years.

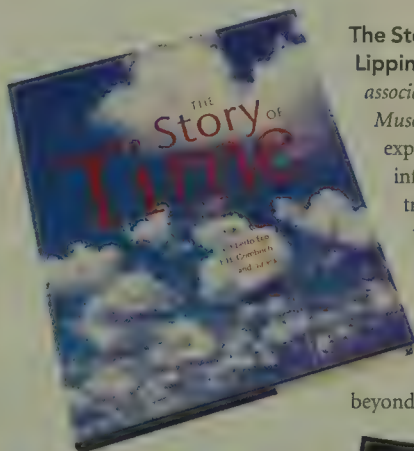
The year 2000 is a phenomenon which few book publishers have chosen to ignore. The trickle of tomes related to the millennium which began to flow in the mid-1990s has turned into a flood.

"Publishers have tapped into the millennial zeitgeist in the most extraordinary way," says Lisa Milton, general manager of Waterstone's flagship store in London's Piccadilly.

"There's scarcely a section in the shop which doesn't have books linked to the turn of the century, whether they are aimed at children, travellers, the science buff, amateur historian or anyone else you care to mention.

"If you look at the books that are selling best among the 750 or so which have the word 'millennium' in the title you get the feeling that there's much more to the occasion than where the best parties are going to be. People genuinely seem to want to know what brought us here to this moment in history and what the future holds."

ILN samples a small selection from the many titles available.

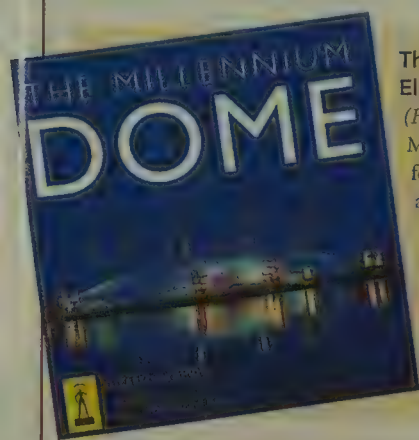


**The Story of Time** by Kristen Lippincott (*Merrell Holberton in association with the National Maritime Museum, £25*). Every aspect of time is explored in this stimulating and informative guide for all who wish to travel through this most universal yet mysterious of subjects. A series of essays and over 400 illustrations depict its creation, measurement and how it is experienced. And there is even a tantalizing glimpse into what might lie beyond time at the end of the universe.

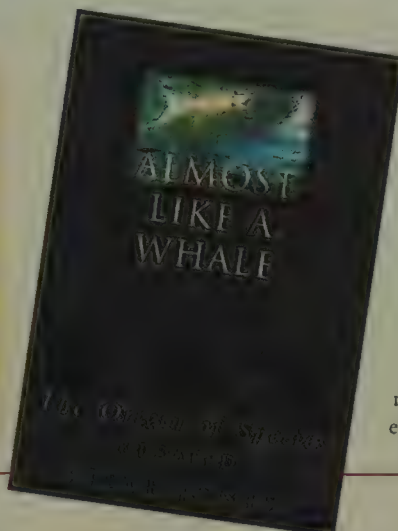


**Britain: The Book of the Millennium** by Anthony Osmond-Evans (*The Beautiful Publishing Division of Good Connections, £29.95*). The glories of Britain on the cusp of the millennium are captured in 200 photographs reflecting the people, events and traditions that have shaped the country over the past 1,000 years.

A particular treat are pictures of places and events not usually photographed, such as the Ceremony of the Keys at the Tower of London. It is no surprise that one copy of the book will be sealed in a time capsule for future generations to discover.



**The Millennium Dome** by Elizabeth Wilhide (*HarperCollins, £19.99*). Prime Minister Tony Blair writes the foreword to this flagship title about the creation of the Dome, illustrated with 200 photographs and plans. The author was given full access to all the key people to write her elegant coffee-table book about the construction of a modern-day wonder.



**Almost Like A Whale** by Professor Steve Jones (*Doubleday, £20*). Professor Jones takes up the challenge of rewriting Charles Darwin's great work *The Origin of Species*, which has been called the book of the millennium. Darwin, of course, had only the facts of the 19th century to support his theory of evolution. But Jones, Professor of Genetics at London University, reads Darwin's mind with the benefit of scientific hindsight and uses the astonishing discoveries of today to make evolution's case. This witty and entertaining book is popular science at its best.



YOUR ULTIMATE GUIDE TO THE YEAR 2000, STARTING WITH A ROUND-UP OF THE CAPITAL'S MOST IMPORTANT MILLENNIUM PROJECTS, PLUS WHERE TO CELEBRATE ON DECEMBER 31 AND THE HOTTEST EVENTS OVER THE FESTIVE PERIOD.

# THE MILLENNIUM STARTS HERE!

MILLENNIUM PROJECTS  
NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS  
THEATRE  
CINEMA  
MUSIC  
OPERA  
DANCE  
EXHIBITIONS  
SPORT  
OTHER EVENTS

## MILLENNIUM PROJECTS

The Dome, of course, is the focus of millennium celebrations but, with more than 200m lavished on the city's tourism & leisure facilities, Londoners have many other attractions to look forward to as well as exciting rejuvenation projects. The Jubilee Line & Docklands Light Railway brought Greensveto within a few minutes of central London, & a new riverboat service will link the London Eye ferries wharf on the South Bank with the Dome site.

Many details of millennium events & new attractions were not finalized at time of going to press, so visitors are advised to check before making a special journey. Information is available on 0900 603344 (calls charged at 60p per minute), or see [www.london2000.co.uk/millennium/](http://www.london2000.co.uk/millennium/)

**Altered images:** Bankside power station in its new role as the Tate Modern; and Greenwich station, part of the Jubilee Line extension which will provide vital links for Londoners.

**Royal Opera House improvements** The ROH box office, shop & information point are now located in a new pedestrian link between Bow Street & the Piazza. The restored Floral Hall will be open to daytime visitors as well as to evening audiences; there will be lunchtime events, a continuous programme of exhibitions & from Jan 10, daily backstage tours.

**Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (0171-304 4000).**

**Croydon Skyline** For the next few years, new lighting technology brings an exciting transformation to more than 20 high-rise office buildings,

suffusing them after dark with gently-changing colours, messages or public displays of art. From Dec 31, midnight.

**Croydon, Surrey, [www.skyline.org.uk/](http://www.skyline.org.uk/)**

**Millennium Experience** Open for the whole of 2000, the £758m Dome contains 14 exhibition zones—Work, Learn, Transcend, Body, Play, Mobility, Health, National Environment, Atmosphere, Communicate, Spirit, Rest, Mind, & National Identity—and a central performance area featuring a spectacular show of music and skydiving. From Jan 1. Daily 10am-6pm. The Dome, Millennium Peninsula, SE16 (ticket hotline 0170 596 2900; [www.dome2000.co.uk/](http://www.dome2000.co.uk/))

**Thames 2000** A 45-minute riverboat service along the Thames

will link the British Airways London Eye to the Millennium Dome. Starts Jan 1, 8.30am-5.30pm (every half hour). City Centre, Waterloo-Millennium Pier, SE1 to North Greenwich, SE10 (0171-740 0400).

**British Airways London Eye** The 135-metre ferris wheel—taller than St Paul's by 25 metres—will, over the next five years, provide a 30-minute "flight" above the South Bank, & a bird's-eye view of the Palace of Westminster. Opens early Jan. Daily 10am-6pm. Jubilee Gardens, SE1 (0870 5000600).

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**Tate Britain** The forthcoming opening of the new Tate Modern, on Bankside, has released much of the Tate's original space for better display of the rest of the gallery's permanent collection. Six new exhibition galleries, & nine refurbished ones, show British art from 1500 to the present day. Opens March. Daily 10am-5.30pm. Tate Gallery, Millbank, SW1 (0171-497 8000).

**Tate Modern** The £130m redevelopment of the Bankside Power Station will provide a permanent exhibition of the Tate's world-famous

modern collection, making it one of the world's foremost museums of contemporary art. The facade of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott's original building has been retained; the addition of vast quantities of glass creates luminous galleries & provides outstanding views of London. Opens May. Bankside, SE1. A visitor centre showing plans, a scale model of the new gallery & a video link to the building works is currently open by appointment. Mon-Fri 10am-5pm. 25 Summer St, SE1 (0171-401 7302).

**Millennium Bridge** Norman Foster's elegant pedestrian walkway will span the Thames, linking the area around St Paul's Cathedral on the north side of the river with the new Tate Modern, at Southwark. Opens May. Between City of London School, EC4, & Bankside, SE1.

**WWT The Wetland Centre** A vast area of lakes, reedbeds, marsh & ponds—ideal habitats for wildlife—has been created from some 40 hectares of disused reservoirs alongside the river Thames. Visitors to this Wildlife & Wetlands Trust centre will find state-of-the-art facilities from which to observe the breeding lapwing, greaser, crested grebe & other birds. Opens May. Daily 9.30am-6pm. Queen Elizabeth Walk, Barnes, SW13 (0181-409 4400).

**National Portrait Gallery 2000** The new wing will accommodate a bright entrance hall, a basement lecture theatre, escalators, a Tudor Gallery where Richard III, Henry VIII & others will be displayed in chronological order, & a rooftop restaurant with spectacular views from Trafalgar Square to the rooftops of Whitehall. Opens May. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun noon-6pm. National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Pl, WC2 (0171-306 0055).

**Gilbert Collection** The gracious 18th-century South Building of Somerset House has been turned into a home for a renowned collection of decorative arts, gifted to the nation in 1998 by Arthur Gilbert. Among the 800 works of art are gold smelt boxes, silver, mosaic, porcelain, furniture, clocks & portrait miniatures. An annual series of open-air events will be held in the Great Court; the River



Terrace opens as a public promenade, with open-air cafe, restaurant, shop, & a new pedestrian link to Waterloo Bridge. Opens May. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm; Sun noon-6pm. Somerset House, Strand, WC2 (0171-240 4080).

**Imperial War Museum** More than £12.5m of lottery money has been given to the museum for its long-term development, including a new wing, housing a permanent Holocaust exhibition & an exhibition called The Age of Total War, along with new study, education & conference facilities. Opens May/June. Daily 10am-6pm.

**Showtime:** Enjoy the spectacular performances and exhibitions on show at the Millennium Dome.

**Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Rd, SE1 (0171-416 5320).**  
**Science Museum Wellcome Wing** The £15m building, located between the Natural History Museum, Imperial College & the Science Museum, will be devoted to contemporary science, medicine & technology & will include a 450-seat IMAX cinema. Opens June. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm; Sun 11am-6pm.

**Science Museum, Exhibition Rd, SW7 (0171-338 8080).**  
**Wallace Collection Centenary** A clear glass roof over the courtyard will provide four new galleries & a lecture theatre in time for the centenary of the collection's opening, & two new basement galleries allow enough space for all items now to be exhibited. Opens June/July. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm; Sun 2-3pm. Wallace Collection, Manchester Sq, W1 (0171-935 0687).  
**Millennium Seed Bank** The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, has initiated this vast, 14-year scheme to collect seeds from 25,000 species of UK wild plants & worldwide dryland flora.





# Millennium projects

Frozen for storage in an underground vault in Sussex, any that become extinct in their original habitat can then be regenerated to provide replacement crops or for use in medical research. In the low, beanpod-shaped buildings that have sprung up alongside Wakefield's existing Elizabethan mansion, visitors can see an exhibition on the subject & will be able to watch scientists at work. Opens summer. Daily 10am-6.30pm. *Wakehurst Place, Ardingly, W Sussex (01444 894066).*

**ExCeL** London's new international exhibition centre, in Docklands, will eventually provide a 66,000 sq metre hall, plus conference, meeting & banqueting facilities & later, three on-site hotels. Close to London City Airport & served by several stations, it has a waterside location that allows it to receive large marine exhibitions as well as more conventional ones. First phase opens autumn. *Royal Victoria Dock, E16 (0171-476 0101).*

**British Museum Great Court** The famous Reading Room is undergoing restoration, & a giant steel-&-glass roof set over the two-acre courtyard at the centre of the great building will open up the inner court to visitors, creating a dramatic new public space. The museum's ethnographic collection, formerly at Burlington House, will be rehoused in the new Sainsbury African Galleries; other parts of its vast collections that are not on current display will be accessible in virtual reality through banks of computers. Opens autumn. Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun noon-6pm. *British Museum, Great Russell St. WC2 (0171-636 1555).*

**AND FURTHER AHEAD**  
**The Lindley Library** The Royal Horticultural Society has been awarded a grant of £1.8m from the Heritage Lottery Fund towards new, more spacious accommodation at its Westminster headquarters in Vincent Square for the renowned Lindley Library. This important part of our horticultural heritage is a priceless collection of books, illustrations, periodicals & trade catalogues collected in the 19th century by a former Secretary of the Society. Opens early 2001.

**National Library of Women** A brand-new, energy-conscious building on Old Castle Street concealed behind the Victorian façade of, appropriately, an old East End wash-house—will house the Fawcett Library, Europe's most extensive archive of Women's Studies. Among the material relating to the changing role of women in society are many items associated with the suffragette movement. Opens early 2001.

**Docklands Museum** In a Grade I-listed warehouse at West India Quay, visitors will learn about the history of London's river, port, industry & communities. The artifacts, paintings, oral testimonies, photographs & archive material on show come from the collections of the Museum of London & the Port of London. Opens early 2001.

**Firepower! The Museum of Artillery** Exciting audio-visual displays will recreate battle scenes as visitors enter this new museum at Woolwich, housed in restored buildings at the Royal Arsenal site which were, in the 18th century, the centre of technical development & manufacture of British artillery. Opens May 2001.

## NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS

**Below are some of the events, both religious & secular, that will usher in the new millennium. London's major public extravaganza. The Big Time, brings colour & spectacle to the banks of the Thames, & is followed by the capital's year-long String of Pearls festival. Though most other events listed are invitation-only, several will feature among television coverage of the celebrations, & some, from bell-ringing to artillery salutes, will be so loud that it will be impossible to miss them.**

*Not all aspects of the events given below were finalised at time of going to press, so it is wise to check details before making a special journey. A millennium hotline for London-based events is available on 09068 663344 (calls charged at 60p a minute at all times), or for the latest millennium information visit [www.londontown.com/millennium/](http://www.londontown.com/millennium/)*

**United Christian Procession of Witness** Anglicans & Catholics join forces to celebrate the millennium with an evening of events, including a Service of Light at Westminster Abbey at 6pm, a candle-lit procession along Victoria Street from the Abbey to Westminster Cathedral Piazza from 7pm, & an open-air liturgy in front of the Cathedral at 7.25pm. The bells of St Margaret's, Westminster will be

***Bridge building:** The elegant Millennium Bridge a new Thames crossing for pedestrians.*

rung from 11.30pm until Big Ben strikes, when the Abbey's own bells will ring a quarter peal to herald the year 2000. On New Year's Day the Abbey will be open for prayer & individual visitors from 10am-1.45pm, & the bellringers will perform a full peal (lasting four hours) at noon. Dec 31-Jan 1.

*Westminster, SW1 (0171-222 8010).*

**Watchnight Service** Those gathered outside the cathedral will be able to hear the service relayed via speakers. Dec 31, 11.15pm. On New Year's Day, an eight-hour peal of bells will ring out from 8.30am; St Paul's will be open free of charge for prayer on Jan 1, with worship led on the hour from the pulpit. Members of the Royal Family attend a special National Millennium Service, Jan 2, 2.30pm. *St Paul's Cathedral, EC4 (0171-236 4128).*

**The Big Time** A series of events, fairground rides & other entertainment along the Thames form the official London celebration. A "global village" will be set up between Westminster & Blackfriars Bridges &, at the millennium moment, a "river of fire" will spring from the water, illuminating the river from Tower Bridge to Vauxhall. Dec 31, from 11am. *(London Line 2000: 09068 663344).*

**British Gas Millennium Party** An open-air musical spectacular will be relayed from Greenwich, telling the story of the last millennium through music—from classical to pop. The concert will be one of the worldwide celebrations making up BBC1's Countdown to the Millennium programme, from 10pm. Dec 31, *Greenwich Park, SE10 (0870 8462000).*







secondary-school pupils. Jan 1, noon. *Various venues, nationwide; London venues include St George's Cathedral, Lambeth Road, SE1 (0171-240 0880).*

**London Millennium Parade** With more than 10,000 participants including 40 high-school marching bands & 2,000 cheerleaders from the United States – the capital's annual New Year's Day Parade promises to be bigger & better than ever. As well as the usual clowns, jugglers & other entertainers, there will be the "super-colossal" eight-story-high inflatable cartoon figures. Jan 1. Starts noon, finishes approx 2.15pm. *From Parliament Sq, SW1, via Whitehall, Trafalgar Sq, Lower Regent St, Piccadilly & Berkeley Street, finishing in Berkeley Sq, W1 (0181-566 8586).*

**String of Pearls** A year-long festival of son-et-lumière events,

parades, performances, pyrotechnics & community projects, held at venues within a stone's throw of the river Thames. Highlights include mystery plays in Southwark from April to July, Tuesday tours of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office from May to July, & unprecedented access to Lambeth Palace, home of the Archbishop of Canterbury, between April & November. Jan 1-Dec 31. *From Kew, Surrey, to Greenwich, SE10. Details from 0171-665 1540, or [www.stringofpearls.org.uk/calendar/cal.html](http://www.stringofpearls.org.uk/calendar/cal.html)*



**New Year's Eve Celebration.** A sumptuous array of displays, feasts & fireworks make up a party that will keep abreast, via global links on giant TV screens, with happenings around the world. Dec 31. *Royal Victoria Dock, Tidal Basin Rd, E16 (0181-557 8759).*

**Millennium Fireworks Display.** A family extravaganza, open to all, with dazzling pyrotechnics & other entertainment. Dec 31, approx 10.30pm-1am. *Blackheath, SE3 (0171-314 8060).*

**Millennium 2000 Gun Salutes.** The military & others will be firing salutes at 2,000 sites as midnight strikes – starting in New Zealand & finishing in the Falklands—to herald the new millennium. Even if they can't actually see the ceremonies, Londoners will no doubt hear the 200 rounds to be fired off at locations in the capital, planned to be within a mile radius of the Millennium Dome. Dec 31, midnight. *Various venues. London & worldwide.*

**Floodlit churches.** Funded by the Millennium Commission, 400 of Britain's churches, large & small, will be floodlit, starting on the stroke of twelve. Dec 31, midnight. *Various venues, nationwide.*

**Celebration 2000.** To ring in the new age, bells from some 40,000 churches of all denominations will toll

for five minutes on New Year's Day. A short service follows in each to celebrate the birth of Christ, to give thanks for the last millennium & to seek blessings on the third. Most services will incorporate a special prayer, written as a result of a competition for the nation's

**Going with a bang:** Fireworks and gun salutes will herald the new year.

**On parade:** Cheerleaders and bands lead the festivities on January 1.



TOP LEFT: COLLECTIONS; BRIAN SHILL; ABOVE: IRRP





## THEATRE

Gillian Lynne's lavish new staging of *Dick Whittington & Julia McKenzie's* musical comedy version of *The Ugly Duckling* join the usual festive offerings this Christmas. Two powerful actresses return to the stage, with Maggie Smith in Alan Bennett's *The Lady in the Van* & Helen Mirren in a new American play, *Collected Stories*. The RSC's London winter season has a lusty start with a sexually charged *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, & there's love & hate at the National with *Battle Royal* & a millennial revival of the 1985 trilogy, *The Mysteries*. A Broadway production of *Death of a Salesman* starts a New Year of promising productions. Addresses & telephone numbers are given on the first occasion a theatre's entry appears.

**Antigone** Declan Donnellan directs his new adaptation of Sophocles' classic tragedy in which Antigone, daughter of Oedipus, defies the state by burying her traitorous brother. Tara Fitzgerald takes the title role, with Jonathan Hyde, Anna Calder-Marshall & Zubin Varla among a large cast. Until Jan 15. *Old Vic, Waterloo Rd, SE1* (0171-369 1722). **Antony & Cleopatra** Steven Pimlott tends to over-emphasise the self-dramatising nature of Shakespeare's ageing lovers so that Alan Bates' grizzled warrior poet &

Frances de la Tour's volatile "serpent of the Old Nile" lack majesty. It's left to Malcolm Storry's superb Enobarbus & Guy Henry's vain Caesar to add some of the political perspective lacking in the rest of the production. Jan 13-Apr 6. *Barbican Theatre, Barbican, EC2* (0171-638 8891).

**Battle Royal** There are echoes of modern royal scandals, press intrusion & overspending in Nick Stafford's new play about the acrimonious marriage of George IV & Princess Caroline of Brunswick. Howard Davies directs a cast led by Simon Russell Beale & Zoe Wanamaker as the battling couple. Opens Dec 8. *Lyttelton, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1* (0171-452 3000).

**Collected Stories** Helen Mirren, last seen in the West End in 1994 in Turgenev's *A Month in the Country*, returns to the stage in a more contemporary role. Howard Davies directs American playwright Donald Margulies' play in which Mirren plays a respected novelist betrayed by her protégée (Anne Marie Duff). Opens Nov 30. *Theatre Royal, Haymarket, SW1* (0171 930 8800).

**Comic Potential** Janie Dee gives a touching performance as an android

developing human feelings in Alan Ayckbourn's romantic farce set in a near-future when comedy is dead & daytime TV soaps are performed by robots. Confusion & chaos ensue for a TV producer (David Soul) when an aspiring comedy writer (Matthew Cottle) & the mechanical actress fall in love. *Lyric, Shaftesbury Ave, W1* (0171-494 5045).

**Death of a Salesman** A welcome opportunity to see the acclaimed Broadway revival of Arthur Miller's enduring drama about the tragic necessity of disillusionment & the American Dream. Robert Falls' production features Brian Dennehy as self-deluding Willy Loman & Elizabeth Franz as his wife. Opens Jan 25. *Old Vic*.

**Dublin Carol** The lengthy refurbishment of the Royal Court in Sloane Square has been plagued by funding, construction & sponsorship problems. Now it is finally due to reopen in the New Year with a new work by Conor McPherson. Since he wrote *The Weir*, one of the Court's greatest successes, expectations are high for *Dublin Carol*, in which Brian Cox plays a middle-aged alcoholic whose life is saved by an undertaker. Opens Jan 7. *Royal Court, Sloane Square, SW1* (0171-836 5122).

**Jane Eyre** A revival of Polly Teale's expressionistic Brontë adaptation for Shared Experience, which equates the madwoman in the attic with Jane's self-punishing, passionate self. A cast of eight play many roles in this bold & physical staging of Jane's difficult journey from abused orphan to Rochester's saviour. Nov 23-Dec 24. *New Ambassadors, West St, WC2* (0171-836 6111).

**The Lady in the Van** Maggie Smith plays the eccentric heroine of Alan Bennett's new play, based on his affectionate account of Mary

### **The Pajama Game:** *The 1954 Broadway hit gets up and going once again.*

Shepherd, a bag lady who lived in a variety of vans outside his Camden Town house for 15 years. Nicholas Hytner directs. Considering the talent involved, this sounds very promising. Opens Dec 7. *Queen's Theatre, Shaftesbury Ave, W1* (0171-494 5040).

**A Midsummer Night's Dream** Michael Boyd's RSC production is so sexually charged that, by the end, even the autocratic court in Athens succumbs to passion. This is a fresh & funny rendering of Shakespeare's comedy, full of eye-catching detail & fine performances, including Josette Simon's sexy Titania, Nicholas Jones' regal Oberon, Daniel Ryan's engaging Bottom & Aidan McArdle's lusty Puck. Dec 2-Feb 17. *Barbican Theatre*.

**The Mysteries** *The Nativity, The Passion & Doomsday*, Tony Harrison's muscular adaptations of the medieval Mystery Plays became one of the National's greatest successes in 1985. Now, to celebrate the millennium, these promenade productions are being revived with the same creative team but a new cast, including David Bradley, Cathryn Bradshaw, John Normington & Jack Shepherd. Opens Dec 18. *Cottesloe, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1* (0171-452 3000).

**The Oresteia** This two-part adaptation of Aeschylus' trilogy was one of the last pieces of work by the late Ted Hughes. Katie Mitchell directs this Greek tragedy in which crime breeds vengeance across the generations in the royal house of Atreus. Both parts run in repertory from Nov 18. *Cottesloe, National Theatre*. **Othello** Ray Fearon's jealous Moor is touching when torn between love &

95 years ago

### A flying start

JM Barrie's enduring play for children, *Peter Pan*, originally opened at the Duke of York's on December 27, 1904, with Nina Boucault in

the title role. Captain Hook was played by Gerald Du Maurier, whose five nephews had inspired the character of Peter.

On the opening night, the audience's response to Peter's entreaty "If you believe in fairies, clap your hands", was so overwhelming that Nina Boucault burst into tears. Despite author Anthony Hope's grumble of "Oh for an hour of Herod!", the play was an immediate success and is destined to be revived for many Christmases to come.



DONALD COOPER/PHOTOFEST







hate, but he's too young for a role that requires the vulnerability of an older man. And although Zoe Waites is a strikingly headstrong Desdemona & Richard McCabe brings a humorous edge to Iago's cunning, Michael Attenborough's Edwardian-set RSC production lacks a certain tension. Dec 16-Apr 8. *Barbican Theatre*.

**The Pajama Game** Leslie Ash, Graham Bickley, Anita Dobson & comic poet John Hegley are among a likeable cast in Simon Callow's revival of this 1954 Broadway musical comedy about love across the picket line at an Iowa pajama factory. *Victoria Palace, Victoria St, W1* (0171-834 1317).

**Peggy for You** Within theatrical

### **The Snowman:**

*Handkerchiefs at the ready, as Briggs' story returns to the stage.*



circles, Peggy Ramsay, who died in 1991, was as famous as the playwrights she championed, including Alan Ayckbourn, Joe Orton & David Hare. In Alan Plater's new play, Maureen Lipman plays the inspirational, but disorganised, literary agent who was never afraid to speak her mind. Nov 18-Jan 8. *Hampstead Theatre, Avenue Rd, NW3* (0171-722 9301).

**Remember This** Like his acclaimed BBC drama, *Shooting the Past*, earlier this year, Poliakoff's new play is set in a photo archive where our sense of the past is being eroded by the technological present. Though he can often sacrifice drama for debate, Poliakoff's work is always filled with stimulating ideas. *Lyttelton, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1* (0171-452 3000).

**A Song at Twilight** Corin Redgrave plays a venerable writer & Vanessa Redgrave his ex-lover, who

have a tense reunion in Noël Coward's last full-length play, first seen in 1966. Kika Markham also appears as the writer's loyal wife in this revival by critic & Coward scholar Sheridan Morley. *Gielgud, Shaftesbury Ave, W1* (0171-494 5085).

**Spend Spend Spend** Well-received at the West Yorkshire Playhouse last year, this exuberant musical tells how Yorkshire miner's wife Viv Nicholson had won a huge pools win in 1961, then famously squandered it. Barbara Dickson plays the older & wiser Viv who looks back on her wild past. *Piccadilly Theatre, Denman St, W1* (0171-369 1734).

**Three Days of Rain** Richard Greenberg's drama examines how memory can distort the past & present. Colin Firth & Elizabeth McGovern play brother & sister, & David Morrissey a family friend, who meet in 1995 to sort out a relative's will. Then the actors appear again as these characters' respective parents in a significant moment in 1960. A cool & lyrical piece that is impeccably played. Until Dec 22, then Jan 5-22. *Donmar Warehouse, Earlham St, WC2* (0171-369 1732).

**Two Pianos, Four Hands** This off-Broadway hit, created & performed by two engaging Canadians, Ted Dykstra & Richard Greenblatt, is part play, part sketch show & part concert. In 90 very enjoyable minutes, with the aid of two Steinways, they describe the trials & tribulations of life as aspiring concert pianists. Fun & endearing entertainment. (Simon Robson & Simon Egerton take over from Dec 7.) *Comedy, Panton St, SW1* (0171-369 1731).

**Volpone** Some may find the boisterous energy of Lindsay Posner's RSC production exhausting, but it's still an intelligent & entertaining staging of Ben Jonson's satire on avarice. Malcolm Storry is splendid as an unusually virile & rugged Volpone

& lanky Guy Henry is superb as his equally scheming servant. Dec 2-Feb 17. *Barbican Pit, Barbican, EC2* (0171-638 8891).

### **CHRISTMAS & CHILDREN'S SHOWS**

**Beauty & the Beast** Entertaining big-budget version of the tuneful Disney cartoon. Until Dec 11.

*Dominion, Tottenham Ct Rd, W1* (0171-656 1888).

**The Borrowers** An adaptation of E Nesbit's popular story about the tiny people who live underneath the floorboards. Nov 18-Feb 5.

*Polka Theatre, 240 The Broadway, Wimbledon, SW19* (0181-543 4888).

**A Child's Christmas in Wales** An adaptation of Dylan Thomas' lyrical poem. Dec 14-23.

*Bloomsbury Theatre, Gordon St, WC1* (0171-388 8822).

**Cinderella** With Helen Latham & Clive Rowe. Dec 7-Jan 9.

*Hackney Empire, 291 Mare St, E8* (0181-985 2424).

**Dick Whittington** A musical version by Patrick Prior & Robert Hyman. Dec 1-Jan 22. *Greenwich Theatre, Crooms Hill, SE10* (0181-858 7755).

**Dick Whittington Cats'** choreographer Gillian Lynne has only one feline to worry about as she directs this lavish new show. Dec 16-Jan 29. *Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Ave, EC1* (0171-863 8000).

**Hansel & Gretel** A new staging of the Grimm tale. Nov 25-Dec 30. *Lyric Hammersmith, King St, W6* (0181-741 2311).

**Honk! The Ugly Duckling** Julia McKenzie directs a musical comedy based on the Hans Christian Anderson story. Opens Dec 16. *Olivier, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1* (0171-452 3000).

**The Snowman** The return of last year's enchanting staging of Raymond Briggs' story. Nov 25-Jan 9. *Peacock Theatre, Portugal St, WC2* (0171-863 8222).

**Volpone:** Jonson's  
17th-century take on  
"greed is good".





## CINEMA

There is millennial tension in the air for Arnold Schwarzenegger in *End of Days* & tentative lovers Ray Winstone & Kerry Fox in *Fanny & Elvis*. Disney looks ahead to a new century with *Fantasia 2000* while Tim Roth looks back in *The Legend of 1900*. Ralph Fiennes returns to the screen in the Pushkin adaptation *Onegin* & Pierce Brosnan is back as Bond in *The World is Not Enough*.

**Bringing out the Dead** Director Martin Scorsese reunites with *Taxi Driver* screenwriter Paul Schrader for another intense drama of guilt & madness. Nicolas Cage plays a New York paramedic who, haunted by a girl he couldn't save, tries to survive a sanity-straining weekend. With Patricia Arquette. Opens Jan 7.

**Brokedown Palace** Claire Danes & Kate Beckinsale impress as two American teenagers who are arrested for drug possession while on holiday in Thailand. Bill Pullman, an ex-pat American lawyer takes their case. A conventional drama, but the girls' changing characters, rather than the horrors of prison life, gives it a slightly

fresher edge. Opens Nov 26.

**The Children of the Marshland** Jean Becker conjures up an idyllic 1930s France in a story about two scrap-metal scavengers who live in the marshes, & a factory owner. Veteran actor Michel Serrault is delightful as the owner & ex-footballer Eric Cantona makes a creditable disgraced boxer. Opens Nov 26.

**End of Days** Arnold Schwarzenegger hasn't had a box-office hit lately, so much is riding on this big-budget supernatural thriller. He plays an ex-cop who must stop Satan (Gabriel Byrne) from gaining human form by preventing him taking a virginal bride (Robin Tunney). Opens Dec 10.

**Fanny & Elvis** TV writer Kay Mellor (*Band of Gold*, *Playing the Field*) makes her directorial debut with a romance about two people drawn together on the eve of the millennium after their respective partners elope together. Opens Nov 19.

**Fantasia 2000** Disney's revamped version of its 1940 cartoon feature, made for large-format IMAX screens. Featuring the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, three original visual interpretations of classical pieces are joined by six new sequences inspired



by compositions by Beethoven, Shostakovich, Respighi, Saint-Saëns, Elgar & Stravinsky. Opens Dec 22.

**The Green Mile** Writer-director Frank Darabont made his Oscar-nominated debut with the prison drama *The Shawshank Redemption*, based on a Stephen King story. This is another King adaptation, set in a 1930s American penitentiary. Death-row guard (Tom Hanks) finds his morals challenged by a huge but meek black prisoner who seems to have

**Brokedown Palace:** Drug runners—Kate Beckinsale and Claire Danes.

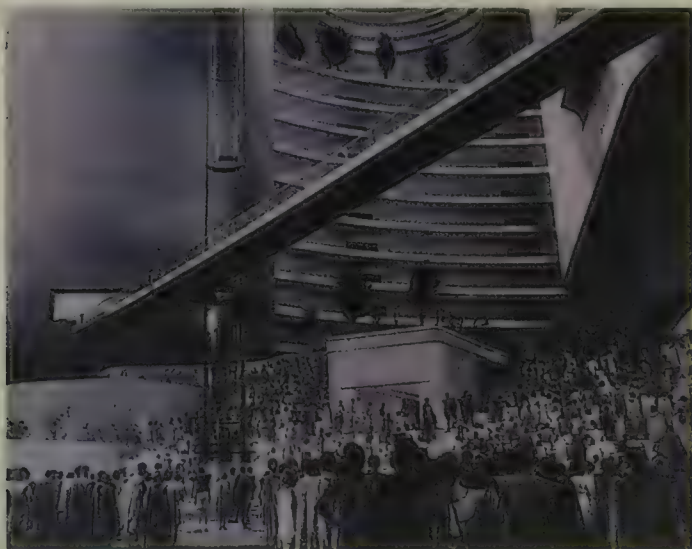
mysterious powers. Opens Jan 7.

**The Iron Giant** This intelligent & well-crafted animated feature transposes Ted Hughes' 1968 children's book to 1957 small-town America. A boy befriends a huge mechanical man & tries to protect him from the bellicose military. Evoking the Cold War paranoia of the atomic age, the cartoon is a neat blend of beguiling adventure & political allegory. Opens Dec 17.

**The Legend of 1900** Giuseppe Tornatore had a great success with *Cinema Paradiso* (reissued on Dec 10) & his new film captures some of that movie's elegiac magic. It's an intriguing story about a child abandoned on a transatlantic liner in 1900, who grows up to become a virtuoso pianist & leads his entire life on board the ship. Tim Roth's measured performance adds much to a film which is finally defeated by its ponderous pace. Opens Dec 17.

**Onegin** This adaptation of Pushkin's verse novel *Eugene Onegin* has been a long-cherished project for Martha Fiennes. She directs brother Ralph in the title role of a dashing, cynical man in 1820s St Petersburg, whose cruelty causes heartbreak. Opens Nov 19.

**The World is Not Enough** The 19th adventure promises a vulnerable 007. Bond (Pierce Brosnan) has to protect the daughter (Sophie Marceau) of a murdered tycoon while being menaced by a nuclear-weapons genius (Robert Carlyle) who is impervious to pain. Judi Dench returns as M & Desmond Llewellyn's Q is assisted by John Cleese. Opens Nov 26.



63 years ago

## Back to the future

The HG Wells-scripted film *Things to Come* (1936), in which a devastating world war leads to plague-ridden tribalism but order is restored by a

technocratic elite, encapsulated many of the author's anxieties on the eve of a new century, in the 1890s. Produced by Alexander Korda's London Films, which helped to revitalise the British film industry in the 1930s, this £350,000 production is best remembered for its futuristic cityscapes of 2036 (seen here) which were achieved by a clever combination of miniature models and optical effects. The film, however, did not connect with the public. When it was announced in the first scene that a bombing force had crossed the coast of England, audiences of the time began to laugh. Perhaps only Wells realised then that within a few years this part of the film could, and sadly did, become grim reality.

## Fanny and Elvis:

Dumped by partners who have eloped together, Ray Winstone and Kerry Fox make their feelings for each other known.







## MUSIC

**Cecilia Bartoli makes her London operatic debut in a concert staging of Handel's *Rinaldo*, & Nigel Kennedy returns to the classical fold to play Bach & Mendelssohn. Lesley Garrett sings a personal selection of songs & arias, & Willard White pays tribute to Paul Robeson. Jazz saxophonists Jan Garbarek & Branford Marsalis continue to experiment with musical blends & more musical influences are explored in a day of Jewish music at the Festival Hall.**

### ALBERT HALL

*Kensington Gore, SW7 (0171-589 8212).*

#### **Jan Garbarek & the Hilliard Ensemble**

The melancholy Norwegian jazz saxophonist continues his haunting collaboration with the early music ensemble. Nov 16.

#### **Jools Holland**

The versatile pianist & raconteur is supported by his Rhythm & Blues Orchestra for an evening ranging from big band to boogie-woogie. Nov 25.

#### **Messiah**

Jane Glover conducts the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra & Huddersfield Choral Society. Dec 18.

#### **King's College Choir**

The choir are joined by the Philharmonia Orchestra for Haydn's *The Creation* (Pt 1), Hutchinson's *Carol Symphony* (excerpts) & Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*. Dec 20.

#### **Lesley Garrett**

The dynamic diva performs a personal selection of arias, songs & seasonal items, with the BBC Concert Orchestra & the Winchester Cathedral Choir. Dec 22.

#### **The Millennium Proms**

An evening of musical & ballet favourites, including Vivaldi, Strauss, Gilbert & Sullivan, Gershwin & the grand *pas de deux* from *Swan Lake*. With the BBC

**London - Community Gospel Choir:** Soulful Christmas songs at the Barbican.

Concert Orchestra, Johann Strauss Dancers & English National Ballet principals Tamara Rojo & Patrick Armand. Dec 30 & 31.

### BARBICAN HALL

*Silk Street, EC1 (0171-638 8891).*

**Rinaldo** Cecilia Bartoli makes her London operatic debut as Almirena in a concert staging of Handel's opera, with David Daniels in the title role. Nov 15 & 17.

#### **London Community Gospel Choir**

Soulful, gospel & traditional songs for Christmas, with guest vocalist Ruby Turner. Dec 23.

#### **Puccini Gala**

Soprano Li Ping Zhang, mezzo soprano Yvonne Lea, tenor John Hudson & baritone Keith Latham and the BBC Concert Orchestra with selections from *Madam Butterfly*, *La Bohème*, *Tosca* & *Turandot*. Dec 27.

#### **Glenn Miller Orchestra**

The band, which maintains Miller's swing sound, is joined by dance troupe The Jiving Lindy Hoppers. Dec 29.

#### **New Year's Day Prom**

Includes work by Tchaikovsky, Bizet, Verdi, Strauss, Brahms & Elgar, with soprano Yvonne Howard, tenor Geraint Dodd, guitarist Craig Ogden & the London Concert Orchestra. Jan 1.

#### **London Philharmonic Orchestra**

Robert Ziegler conducts Rossini's *William Tell Overture*, Schubert's Symphony No 8 (Unfinished), Grieg's Piano Concerto & Beethoven's Symphony No 3 (Eroica). Jan 2.

### ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL

*South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242).*

**Branford Marsalis** The jazz saxophonist's quartet perform work from the new CD, *Requiem*, supported by The Julian Arguelles Octet. Nov 15.

#### **Willard White**

The great bass performs a tribute to Paul Robeson with a wide range of arias, spirituals & popular songs. Nov 16.

#### **Odessa to Jerusalem**

A day of Jewish culture, will include music from Eastern Europe & the Middle East. Nov 28.



63 years ago

## Conduct becoming

Sir Thomas Beecham became the most influential British conductor of the first half of this century. With his pointed beard and magisterial air, he cut a distinctive figure in front of the orchestra. In a long career, he founded an opera company, two orchestras (the London Philharmonic in 1932, and Royal Philharmonic in 1947), and championed the work of Delius and Sibelius. Seen here in 1936, conducting the international opera season at Covent Garden, he was also responsible as conductor and impresario for some 120 operas. Energetic and outspoken, he famously summed up his philosophy of life by remarking that you should try everything once, except incest and folk-dancing.

**Diana Krall** One of the finest voices in jazz puts her own spin on old & new work. Dec 1.

**Nigel Kennedy** The maverick maestro performs Bach's Concerto for violin in A Minor, Concerto in C minor for violin & oboe, Concerto for two violins & Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto. Dec 2.

**A Christmas Celebration** Includes excerpts from Handel's *Messiah*, Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*, Bach's *A Christmas Oratorio*, & Howard Blake's *The Snowman*. Dec 12-16.

#### **Maddy Prior**

The former Steeleye Span vocalist is supported by the Carnival Band for an assortment of traditional & popular tunes from the past 500 years. Dec 16.

#### **Stars at Christmas Carol**

Dame Vera Lynn hosts a star-studded evening of readings & carols to raise money for the cerebral palsy charity Scope. Dec 18.

**Puccini Gala:** One fine evening, with soprano Li Ping Zhang at the Barbican.

#### **Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht 1899**

Austrian waltzes, traditional carols & marches performed by the Lehar Schrammel Ensemble. Dec 19.

#### **The South African Gospel Singers**

The 18 vocalists & musicians draw on African traditions to create passionate, infectious harmonies. Dec 21.

### WEMBLEY ARENA

*Empire Way, Wembley (0181-902 0902)*

**Eurythmics** Leading 80s pop duo, Dave Stewart & Annie Lennox, have reformed for more synthesiser & guitar-based rock. Dec 3.

#### **Barry White & Earth, Wind & Fire**

An entertaining double-bill of White's gravelly ballads & Earth Wind & Fire's dynamic jazz-funk. Dec 15.

**Barry Manilow** The tenor-voiced singer-songwriter remains the consummate showman. Jan 14-15.







## OPERA

Plácido Domingo leads a gala evening to mark the opening of the refurbished Royal Opera House, where Bryn Terfel also sings Verdi's *Falstaff* for the first time in London & John Tomlinson reprises his role as the Green Knight in Harrison Birtwistle's *Gawain*. David McVicar stages a new production of Handel's *Alcina* for English National Opera & English Festival Opera perform *La Traviata*.

### ENGLISH FESTIVAL OPERA

Royal Festival Hall, South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242).

**La Traviata** Sarah Alexander's production features Jane Leslie MacKenzie as Violetta, Luis Rodriguez as Alfredo & Mark Glanville as Giorgio. Dec 26-30.

### ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA

London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-632 8300).

**Alcina** David McVicar's new production of Handel's tragi-comic tale, about a sorceress who lures men to her island, then transforms them into animals or rocks when tired of them. Joan Rodgers has the magical title role, with Sarah Connolly as Ruggerio, her latest victim of love. In repertory from Nov 29-Jan 27.

**La Bohème** Steven Pimlott's production sets Puccini's bittersweet love story in 1950s Paris. With Sandra Ford as Mimi & Julian Gavin as Rodolfo. In repertory until Feb 17.

**Peter Grimes** Robert Brubaker sings the title role, with Vivian Tierney as Ellen Orford & Peter Sidhom as Captain Balstrode. Tim Albery directs. In repertory until Dec 7.

### Le Grand Macabre:

*The end of the world at the new Royal Opera House.*

### ROYAL OPERA

Covent Garden, WC2 (0171-304 4000).

Prior to its new season, the Royal Opera House reopens on Dec 4, after extensive refurbishment, with a celebratory evening which will include performances by Plácido Domingo, Deborah Polaski & the Chorus & Orchestra of the Royal Opera House under Bernard Haitink, as well as the Royal Ballet.

**La Clemenza di Tito** Karl Ernst & Ursel Hermann's production of Mozart's late work has Vinson Cole, Vesselina Kasarova & Patricia Schuman in the demanding roles of Tito, Sesto & Vitellia. In repertory from Jan 22-Feb 3.

**Falstaff** Welsh baritone Bryn Terfel sings his first Falstaff in London in Graham Vick's new production of Verdi's exuberant ensemble piece. In repertory from Dec 6-18.

**Gawain** A revival of Harrison Birtwistle's 1991 opera, with John

Tomlinson reprising his acclaimed role as the Green Knight who sets a strange challenge for King Arthur's knights. Wilhelm Hartmann (Gawain) & Constance Hauman (Morgan le Fay) make their house debuts. In repertory from Jan 7-17.

**Le Grand Macabre** First seen at the Salzburg festival, 1997, there is a millennial feel to Peter Sellars' staging of Ligeti's fable in which the mysterious prophet Nekrotzar (Willard White) arrives in Breughelland to announce the end of the world. In repertory from Dec 10-23.

### OUT OF TOWN

#### ENGLISH TOURING OPERA

**Carmen** With Jacqueline Miura/Heather Shipp as Bizet's doomed

**La Traviata: Janis Kelly & Thomas Randle are Opera North's tragic lovers.**



BELOW: CIVIL WAR/PERFORMING ARTS LIBRARY. RIGHT: DONALD COOPER/PHOTOGRAPH

heroine & Geraint Dodd as Don Jose. **Macbeth** Verdi's first Shakespearean opera, with Eddie Wade as Macbeth & Sarah Rhodes as Lady Macbeth.

Nov 22-24, *Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton* (01902 428165); Nov 26-27, *Playhouse, Weston-super-Mare* (01934 627457).

#### GLYNDEBOURNE TOURING OPERA

**The Bartered Bride** New production by Nikolaus Lehnhoff, with Orla Boylan as Marenka & Michael König as Jenik.

**La Clemenza di Tito** Emma Selway sings Sesto, & Susannah Glanville is Vitellia in Nicholas Hytner's staging.

**Pelléas et Mélisande** Graham Vick directs Debussy's haunting masterpiece, with Mary-Louise Aitken as Mélisande & Gerard Theruel as Pelléas.

Nov 16-20, *Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent* (01782 213800); Nov 23-27, *New Victoria, Woking* (01483 761144); Nov 30-Dec 4, *Theatre Royal, Plymouth* (01752 267222); Dec 7-11, *Theatre Royal, Norwich* (01603 630000).

#### OPERA NORTH

*Grand Theatre, Leeds* (0113-222 6222)

**A Midsummer Night's Dream** New staging of Benjamin Britten's opera, with Christopher Josey as Oberon, Claron McFadden as Titania & Jonathan Best as Bottom. Dec 16, 18, Jan 13-15.

**Don Giovanni** David McVicar's production has Garry Magee as Mozart's anti-hero, Jonathan Best as his servant & Majella Cullagh as Anna. Nov 16, 19 & 20.

**La Traviata** Janis Kelly & Thomas Randle sing Verdi's tragic lovers. Annabel Arden directs. Nov 18 & 20.

#### SCOTTISH OPERA

*Festival Theatre, Edinburgh* (0131-529 6000)

**Carmen** Patricia Bardon has the title role in Caurier & Leiser's staging. Nov 16, 18, 20, Dec 22.

**Friend of the People** A new work by David Horné & Robert MacLennan, with baritone Peter Savidge as Thomas Hill, a Scottish parliamentary reformer at the time of the French Revolution. Nov 17, 19.

**The Marriage of Figaro** Christopher Purves sings the title role. Dec 21, 23, Jan 14-15. Also: Dec 7-18, *Theatre Royal, Glasgow* (0141-332 9000)

#### WELSH NATIONAL OPERA

**The Carmelites** Phyllida Lloyd directs Poulenc's powerful drama, with Caitlin Wyn Davies as Sister Blanche.

**Don Giovanni** Robert Hayward sings Giovanni with Arwel Huw Morgan as Leporello in Katie Mitchell's staging. Nov 16-20, *Hippodrome, Birmingham* (0121-622 7486); Nov 23-27, *Empire, Liverpool* (0151-709 1555); Dec 7-11, *Apollo, Oxford* (01865 244544).







## DANCE

**Irek Mukhamedov & Sylvie Guillem** are among a star-studded line-up for the re-opening of the Royal Opera House where the Royal Ballet takes up residence. The company also showcases **Darcey Bussell & Viviana Durante** in *The Nutcracker*, while different seasonal fare is provided by **Atlanta Ballet's Peter Pan**. Norwegian National Ballet perform **Michael Corder's Romeo & Juliet** & **Rambert Dance Company** present the London premiere of **Christopher Bruce's** new full-length work, *God's Plenty*.

**Adventures in Motion Pictures** Matthew Bourne's popular all-male *Swan Lake* returns to the West End. Opens Feb, *Piccadilly Theatre, Denman St, W1* (0171-369 1734). **Atlanta Ballet** America's first regional ballet company makes its British debut, with John McFall's sumptuous adaptation of *Peter Pan*. Dec 21-Jan 8. *Royal Festival Hall, South Bank Centre, SE1* (0171-960 4242). **Dancing on Dangerous Ground** The creative team behind *Riverdance*

## Rambert Dance Company: Ghost Dances.

**Atlanta Ballet:** America's premier regional ballet company makes its London debut with a dazzling *Peter Pan*.

brings a new show into London, directed by Ian Judge. A 30-strong company is led by Colin Dunne, Michael Flatley's successor in *Riverdance*. Opens Nov 30. *Theatre Royal, Drury Lane* (0171-494 5000). **English National Ballet** Derek Deane's popular production of *The Nutcracker*, combining modern & classical, begins the winter season, Dec 14-Jan 8. In the New Year, there is a triple bill of *La Bayadère (Act III)*, Glen Tetley's *Sphinx* & *The Rite of Spring*, Jan 10-12, & Ronald Hynd's *Coppelia*, Jan 13-15. Guest artists include Agnes Oaks, Thomas Edur, Michael Coleman & James Supervia. *Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2* (0171-632 8300). **Norwegian National Ballet** Last in London 50 years ago, the company returns with its production of Prokofiev's *Romeo & Juliet*, choreographed by Michael Corder. Nov 16-20. *Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Ave, EC1* (0171-863 8800).

## Rambert Dance Company

Programme one: London premiere of Christopher Bruce's new full-length ballet, *God's Plenty*, partly inspired by *The Canterbury Tales*, with music by

Dominic Muldowney, Nov 23-27.

## Programme

two: Merce Cunningham's *August Pace*, Bruce's *Ghost Dances* & Twyla Tharp's *The Golden Section*, Nov 29-Dec 1. Programme three: *Embarque* by Siobhan Davies, with music by Steve Reich, Bruce's *Swansong*, & the London premiere of *Greymatter* by Rambert dancer Didi Veldman, with music by Philip Feeney, Dec 2-4. *Sadler's Wells*.

**Royal Ballet** The company takes up residence at the refurbished Royal Opera House & joins the Royal Opera for a gala performance on Dec 4, which will include company principals & guest artists Sylvie Guillem, Viviana Durante, Irek Mukhamedov & Angel Corella. The season opens with *A Celebration of International Choreography*, featuring the world premieres of Siobhan Davies's *A Stranger's Taste* & Ashley Page's *Hidden Variables*, as well as a changing selection of pieces from the likes of David Bintley, William Forsythe & Twyla Tharp, Dec 8 & 16; Jan 20, 21 & 29. A revised staging of Peter Wright's *The Nutcracker* then runs in repertoire for the Christmas season from Dec 17-Jan 8. Kenneth Macmillan's choreography is later celebrated in a triple bill: *Concerto*, *Rituals* & *Gloria*. In repertoire from Jan 12-Feb 7. *Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2* (0171-304 4000).

## OUT OF TOWN

**Birmingham Royal Ballet** Peter Wright's production of *The Nutcracker*. Dec 4-15, *Hippodrome, Birmingham* (0121-639 3000).

**National Ballet Company of Latvia** Supported by an orchestra drawn from the Royal Opera House, the company performs *The Sleeping Beauty*. Dec 20-29, *Theatre Royal, Glasgow* (0141-332 9000).

**Northern Ballet Theatre A** lush revival of Massimo Moricone's 1992 version of *A Christmas Carol*. Nov 16-20.

*Lyceum Theatre, Sheffield* (0114-249 6000); Nov 23-27, *Grand Theatre, Leeds* (0113-222 6222). Plus Didi Veldman's version of *Carmen*, with barefoot dancers: Nov 30-Dec 4, *New Theatre, Hull* (01482 226655); Dec 7-11, *New Victoria Theatre, Woking* (01483 761144).

65 years ago

## Fonteyn: la dolce diva

As a performer, teacher and promoter of ballet, Margot Fonteyn has had few equals this century. Within five years of joining the Vic-Wells Ballet in 1934, she had danced leading parts in *Giselle*, *Swan Lake* and *The Sleeping Beauty* as well as originating many roles for Frederick Ashton. She also won acclaim in such revivals as Sadler's Wells Ballet's 1954 production of Fokine's *The Firebird* (seen here) and soon gained international recognition for her musicality, style and characterisation. Age and illness did not diminish her commitment, and her work with Rudolph Nureyev, begun in 1962 when she was 43, remains one of ballet's most celebrated partnerships.





## EXHIBITIONS

The millennium dominates in the British Museum's Apocalypse exhibition & the National Maritime Museum's Story of Time. The refurbished Barbican gallery shows photographs by members of Magnum, while the Royal Academy looks at women painters of the Russian avant-garde, & offers a last chance to view the Van Dyck exhibition. Readers are advised to check dates & times before making a special journey.

### BANKSIDE GALLERY

48 Hopton St, SE1 (0171-928 7521).

**Light Fantasti** The dawn of a new millennium is celebrated in glowing paintings & prints by members of the Royal Watercolour Society & the Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers. Nov 27-Jan 16. Tues 10am-8pm; Wed-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat, Sun 1-5pm. Closed Dec 24-Jan 3.

### AMERICAN ART GALLERY

Silk St, EC2 (0171-382 7105).

**Magnum: Photographers of Our World** Documentary photographs taken by Magnum members over the last 10 years celebrate the picture agency's 50th anniversary. Ranging from Tiananmen Square to the present, it contains images by more than 50 photographers, including Henri Cartier-Bresson, Eve Arnold, Elliott Erwitt & Chris Steele-Perkins. Dec 1-Mar 13. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm (Wed until 8pm); Sun & bank hols noon-6pm. Closed Dec 24, 25 & 31.

### BRITISH MUSEUM

Great Russell St, WC1 (0171-636 1555).

**The Apocalypse & the Shape of Things to Come** Using medieval manuscripts, Dürer's woodcuts & 18th-century imagery from Gillray & Blake, the exhibition examines the pictorial traditions associated with apocalyptic phases which have often occurred at the end of centuries, and continues through films, nihilism & futuristic fantasy, to the horrors of the two World Wars. Dec 18-Apr 24. Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun noon-6pm. Closed Dec 24, 25, 31, Jan 1.

### COURTAULD INSTITUTE

Somerset House, Strand, WC2 (0171-848 2526).

**Art Made Modern** The vision of Roger Fry, painter, critic & impresario. Born in 1866, he shaped this country's view of contemporary art with his appreciation of the Omega Workshop & British & French Post-Impressionism. Until Jan 23. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm; Sun, & Dec 27-Jan 3 noon-6pm. Closed Dec 24-26, 31, Jan 1.

### DESIGN MUSEUM

28 Shad Thames, SE1 (0171-378 6055).

**Design: Process, Progress, Practice** A look at some familiar items in our daily lives, & factors that influenced their design. Includes red telephone boxes, vacuum cleaners, &



## National Gallery: Why Botticelli's mystic work caused a stir half a millennium ago.

a JCB loader. Until Jan 30. Daily 11.30am-6pm. Closed Dec 25-27. **ESTORICK COLLECTION** 39a Canonbury Sq, N1 (0171-704 9522).

**Gino Severini** This exhibition of the work of one of Italy's most important 20th-century artists traces Severini's development between 1910 to 1920, from post-Impressionistic Paris cityscapes through his Futurist period, his adoption of Cubism & an eventual move towards a classical & geometric style. Until Jan 9. Wed-Sat 11am-6pm; Sun noon-5pm. Closed Dec 25-28 & Dec 31-Jan 3.

### FESTIVAL HALL FOYER

South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242).

**World Press Photo** Sport, science, technology, nature, & everyday life during 1998, as viewed by the world's top photo-journalists. Nov 10-Dec 6. Daily 10am-10pm.

### FINE ART SOCIETY

148 New Bond St, W1 (0171-629 5116).

**Julian Barrow's London: Art for Christmas** Contemporary watercolours & oil paintings of

## Barbican Art Gallery: Magnum, the most powerful photographers in the world.

Chelsea, Mayfair, St James's, Hampstead & Kensington. Nov 22-Dec 3. Mon-Fri 9.30am-5.30pm; Sat 10am-1pm.

### GEFFRYE MUSEUM

Kingsland Rd, E2 (0171-739 9893).

**Mary Beal** The life of the 17th-century artist, who was the most prolific female portrait painter of her time. Manuscripts & letters build up a picture of Beale & her learned circle of friends. Until Jan 30. Tues-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun, & Dec 27, 28, Jan 2 & 3 noon-5pm. Closed Dec 24-26, 31, Jan 1.

### HAWARD GALLERY

South Bank, SE1 (0171-928 3144).

**Lucio Fontana** A show for the centenary of this avant-garde Italian artist features around 100 works in clay, plaster, ceramic & bronze, as well as a selection of the slashed & punctured canvases for which Fontana is best known. Until Jan 9. Daily 10am-6pm (Tues, Wed until 8pm). Closed Dec 24-26, 31 & Jan 1. **LEIGHTON HOUSE MUSEUM** 12 Holland Park Rd, W14 (0171-602 3316).

**Artists at Home: the Holland Park Circle 1850-1900** The quiet residential streets of Holland Park were the powerhouse of late-19th-century British art. Photographs, models, plans, drawings & paintings show life when Lord Leighton's contemporaries commissioned houses from Shaw, Burges, Webb & other great architects. Nov 29-Feb 26. Mon-Sat 11am-5.30pm. Closed Dec 24-27, 31, Jan 1.

### LUMLEY CAZALE

33 Davies St, W1 (0171-491 4767).

**Henri Matisse** Major retrospective of graphic works by one of the century's most influential artists, with most items for sale. Prices range from £4,000 to £100,000. Nov 18-Dec 23. Mon-Fri 10am-6pm.

### MUSEUM OF LONDON

London Wall, EC2 (0171-600 3699).

**The London Sale** Paintings, drawings, watercolours & prints showing the capital from the 17th century to the present, including works by Rowlandson, Sandby, Sickert, Canaletto & Tissot. (The works will all be auctioned at Christie's on Nov 26.) Nov 13-18.

### Alfred the Great 849-99:

**London's Forgotten King** Anglo-Saxon artefacts, including the Ashmolean Museum's famous Alfred Jewel, celebrate the life of this English monarch. Until Jan 9.

**London Eats Out with Simply Food.co.uk** Five centuries of eating out in London, looking at food in the



BRUNO BARBEY/MAGNUM PHOTOS





**Here's looking at you kid:** As time goes by, at the National Maritime Museum.

street, in fairs & festivals, wartime rations, kitchen utensils & food archaeology—including a Tudor banana, discovered recently at Southwark. Until Feb 27.

Tues-Sat 10am-5.50pm (Dec 31 until 4pm); Sun noon-5.50pm. Closed Dec 24-26 & Jan 1.

NATIONAL GALLERY

Trafalgar Sq, WC2 (0171-747 2885).

**Kingdom Come: Botticelli's Mystic Nativity**

An exhibition organised around this controversial late work, painted half a millennium ago, in 1500. Nov 19-Feb 6.

Sainsbury Wing:

**Renaissance Florence: The Art of the 1470s**

The relationship between the arts that flowered in the city under the rule of Lorenzo de' Medici. Artists of the time included Sandro Botticelli, Filippino Lippi & Antonio & Piero Pollaiuolo. Until Jan 16. Daily 10am-6pm (Wed until 9pm). Closed Dec 24-26, 31 & Jan 1.

NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM

Greenwich, SE10 (0181-858 4422).

Queen's House:

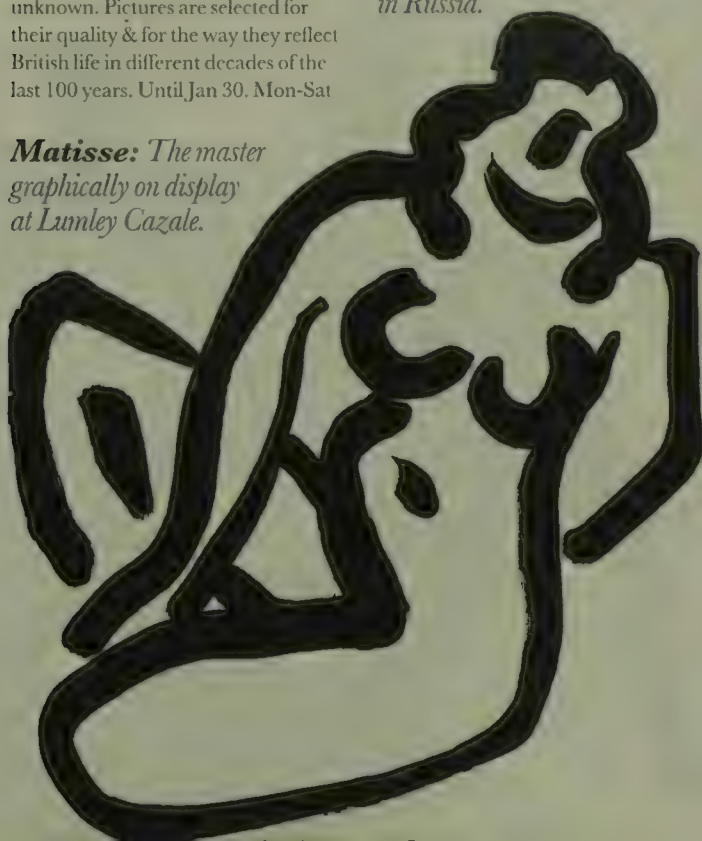
**The Story of Time** In preparation for the millennium, this exhibition shows man's fascination with passing time, looking at everything from the zodiac to immortality to the Apocalypse, & whether there might really be such a thing as "the end of time". Dec 1-Sept 26. Daily 10am-5pm. Closed Dec 24-26, 31 & Jan 1.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

St Martin's Pl, WC2 (0171-306 0055).

**Faces of the Century** Major photographic exhibition featuring 100 portraits of the famous & the unknown. Pictures are selected for their quality & for the way they reflect British life in different decades of the last 100 years. Until Jan 30. Mon-Sat

**Matisse:** The master graphically on display at Lunnley Cazale.



10am-6pm;  
Sun noon-6pm.  
Closed Dec 24-27, 31, Jan 1.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS

Piccadilly, W1 (0171-300 8000).

**Amazons of the Avant-Garde.**

Paintings & works on paper by six women artists who played a significant part in the Russian avant-garde movement are used to display the evolution of Modern Russian art. Nov 13-Feb 6.

**Van Dyck 1599-1641** More than 100 paintings, among them

mythological & religious works made in Antwerp, portraits of Genoese aristocracy &, of course, grandiose portrayals of King Charles I of England & his courtiers. Until Dec 10.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART

Kensington Gore, SW7 (0171-590 4186).

**Absolut Secret** The eagerly-awaited exhibition of postcard-sized

**Amazons of the Avant-Garde:** Women artists who helped give birth to modern art in Russia.

art—some 1,500 works priced at £35 apiece. Purchasers

select their favourites

without knowing the identity of the artist—it could be a Hockney or a piece by some as yet unknown hand (the name is not revealed until the end of the exhibition). Viewing Nov 25-Dec 1; sale Dec 2-5; 10am-6pm (Dec 2, 8.30am-8pm).

SHOREDITCH TOWN HALL

380 Old Street, EC1 (information hotline for all venues 0171-729 3301).

**Hidden Art** The town hall is among many different locations in Hackney, Tower Hamlets &

Clerkenwell where more than 300 artists & designers offer a range of alternative Christmas shopping opportunities.

A free bus service will link the main venues. Bishopsgate Goods Yard, Wheeler St. E1. Nov 26-28; Shoreditch & Clerkenwell, EC1. Dec 3-5. Fri noon-8pm; Sat 10am-6pm; Sun noon-6pm.

FATE GALLERY

Millbank, SW1 (0171-887 8008).

**The Art of Bloomsbury.** The paintings of Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant & Roger Fry—all of whom played a prominent role in the history of British art & design—and their contribution to the Omega Workshops of 1913-19, a company established as an outlet for their interior decoration ideas. Until Jan 30. Daily 10am-5.50pm. Closed Dec 25, Jan 1.

VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM

Cromwell Rd, SW7 (0171-938 8349).

**A Grand Design.** In celebration of its official naming by Queen Victoria 100 years ago, the museum shows 250 exceptional works, including Leonardo da Vinci's notebook from the Codex Forster, a jade horse head from the Han Dynasty, & an embroidered evening dress by Christian Lacroix. Until Jan 16. Daily 10am-5.45pm. Closed Dec 24-26, 31, Jan 1.







## SPORT

Racquets twang at the Albert Hall, as John McEnroe defends his Honda Challenge title against Bjorn Borg. Jimmy Connors & other tennis greats. Horses loovers cheer on competitors in the £300,000 showjumping event at Olympia. England cricketers, hoping to improve on their Test performance against New Zealand last summer, head for the sunshine in South Africa



## ATHLETICS

**European Cross-Country Championship** Dec 11. *Veldre, Slovenia* (0121-456 5098).  
**International Cross-Country Meeting** Jan 8. *Durham* (0121-456 5098). Jon Brown & Paula Radcliffe carry British hopes in the men's and women's cross-country events.

## HORSE RACING

**British Championships** Jan 4-9. *Igls, Austria* (01722 340014).  
**European Championship** Jan 10-15. *Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy* (01722 340014). Having won a bronze medal at the 1998 Winter Olympics, Britain is a hot contender for the four-man-bob title in this spine-chilling sport.

## CRICKET

**South Africa v England: 1st Test**, Nov 25-29. *Johannesburg 2nd Test*, Dec 1-5. *Pretoria 3rd Test*, Dec 26-30. *Durban*; 4th Test, Jan 2-6. *Cape Town*; 5th Test, Jan 14-18. *Centurion*; South Africa (travel & ticket information: 01306 744345). High-scoring batsman Nasser Hussain leads a revamped England squad against Hansie Cronje's South Africa team.

## EQUESTRIANISM

**Olympia International Showjumping Championship** Dec 16-20. *Olympia, W1* (0870 9050000). Events include a

**Game, set and match: Danny Safsford defends his title in November.**

91 years ago

## The 1908 Olympics

The IVth Olympiad, due to be held in Rome, was transferred to London's newly built White City stadium in 1908, after the eruption of Vesuvius two years earlier. Some 1,000 athletes representing 18 mostly European nations, including Bohemia, took part in the opening ceremony (above). There was ten tension when the US refused to dip the Stars and Stripes to King Edward in the march past the Royal box, and the Americans later accused the all-British judges of illegal coaching and fixing heats. The British team went on to top the medal table with 56 gold, 50 silver and 39 bronze.

**Set the pace: Britain's cross-country hopes are pinned on Paula Radcliffe.**

showjumping Grand Prix and a dressage demonstration by a pair of light-footed canals.

## HORSE RACING

**St Leger final** Nov 13. *Wimbledon Stadium, Plough Lane, SW17* (0181-946 0000).  
**The Oaks final** Dec 11. *Wimbledon Stadium*. Out to the dogs in style, by dining out at Wimbledon's stadium.

## HORSE RACING

**Hennessy Gold Cup** Nov 27. *Newbury, Berks* (01635 40015).  
**Triplemint Gold Cup** Dec 11. *Cheltenham, Glos* (01242 513014).  
**King George VI Chase** Dec 27. *Kempston Park, Sanday-on-Thames, Surrey* (01932 782292). Which horse will take the trophy this year, and follow in the footsteps of Arkle and One Man?

## WINTER SPORTS

**RAC Rally** Nov 20-23. *Starts & finishes Cheltenham, Glos* (01753 681736). For this annual scramble around some of Britain's less hospitable corners, up-&-coming English driver Richard Barns will be defending his 1998 title.

## UNIVERSITY

**Oxford University v Cambridge University** Dec 7. *Titchfield, Middle* (0181-744 3111).

## TENNIS

**British National Championship** Nov 9-14. *Telford International Centre, Telford* (01932 291919). Current holders Julie Pallin & Danny Safsford will be out to defend their women's and men's titles, respectively.  
**Honda Challenge** Dec 1-5. *Regent Albert Hall, SW1* (0171-369 8212). Thrills & entertainment from stars of the golden age of tennis, including McEnroe, Borg, Connors and Cash.

## OTHER EVENTS

**Seasonal treats for Londoners** ranging from the Great Christmas Pudding Race to carols under the Trafalgar Square Christmas tree. More unusual events include a living nativity scene at London Zoo, & a chance to spit Christmas punch in the former home of Charles Dickens.

**Board-X** Everything for the snowboard enthusiasts, including technical equipment, clothes, & an outdoor jump competition on real snow. Nov 12-14. Fri noon-8pm; Sat, Sun 10am-8pm. *Battersea Park (Chelsea Bridge entrance), SW11* (0171-729 8442).

**The Lord Mayor's Show** The city's incoming Lord Mayor, of Charles Dickens.

**Nice try: Oxford and Cambridge universities tackle each other at Twickenham.**



PHOTO: ILLUSTRATION: JAMES HARRIS



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accompanied by a dazzling procession incorporating some 20 carriages & around 70 carnival-style floats, travels to & from the Law Courts to swear allegiance to the Lord Chief Justice. The day finishes with fireworks, set off from a boat moored between Blackfriars & Waterloo Bridges, at 5pm. Nov 13. *Dep Guildhall* 10.50am.

*Procession travels via* *Pauline, Champs, St Paul's, Fleet St, to Law Courts for 12.30pm; dep Victoria Embankment 1.10pm, returns via* *Queens Victoria St to Afmision House for 2.30pm; EC3 & EC4 (0171-606 3030).*

**Remembrance Day Ceremony** The royal family & politicians step forward to lay wreaths & lead the nation in honouring the dead of this century's wars. Nov 14, 11am.

**London scene: Thomas Luny's painting is estimated to realise £150,000 at Christie's.**

*Coventry, Whitall, SW1.* (0171-737 3410).

**Ghostly Ghouls** On During a series of twilight tours, one of the Yeoman Warders reveals the spooky secrets of one of Britain's most haunted sites. Visitors in search of thrills will tour the Medieval Palace, the Chapel Royal & the sinister Salt Tower, formerly a state prison. Nov 18, 19, 25, 26, 7pm. *Tower of London, EC3* (pre-booking essential: ticket hotline 0171-488 5623).

**The Craft Movement** Top-quality crafts from some of the country's most talented makers provide inspiration for covetable Christmas gifts. Nov 20, 21. 10am-5.30pm. *Battersea Town Hall, Leicester Hill, SW11*; Dec 3-5, 10am-5.30pm. *Queen Charlotte Hall, Parkside, Richmond, Surrey* (01373 413333).

**20th Century at Olympia** Furniture, jewellery, art & objects by leading artists & designers from the Arts & Crafts movement to the present day. Items on show range from Cocteau ceramics to punk

**Crafty gift ideas: a range of inspirational crafts by leading artisans for sale at Battersea.**

clothing. Bloomsbury treasures to ornate jackets. Nov 24-28. Wed-Fri 11am-8pm; Sat 11am-7pm; Sun 11am-5pm. *Olympia 2, W14* (0171-370 0839).

**The London Sale** Paintings, drawings, watercolours & rare prints showing London scenes from the 17th century to the present day. Estimated at £100,000 to £150,000 is a 1795 painting by Thomas Luny showing St Paul's Cathedral & Blackfriars Bridge; other subjects include Hyde Park, Hampstead Heath & Richmond. Nov 26, 10.30am. *Christie's, 8 King St, SW1* (0171-389 2506).

**Christmas Tree** The branches of the huge spruce, an annual gift to London from the Norwegian capital of Oslo, are decked with twinkling white lights which are illuminated each evening. Dec 2-Jan 6, 4pm-midnight; carol-singing Dec 11-21, 3-9pm. *Trafalgar Sq, WC2* (0171-211219).

**International Festival of Chocolate** A paradise for chocolate-lovers, who can discover untamed flavours & uses for their favourite food through displays, tastings & cookery demonstrations. Dec 3-5. Fri noon-6pm; Sat 10am-6pm; Sun 10am-5pm. *RHS Hall, Vincent Sq, SW1* (0870 9010020).

**London Zoo** Visitors to Santa's Grotto will be entertained by the live nativity scene, where major roles are filled by some of the zoo's resident camels, sheep, donkeys, goats & reindeer. Christmas story-telling sessions for children, plus mince pies & mulled wine for parents. Dec 4, 5, 11, 12, 18-24, 10.30am-11pm. *London Zoo, Regent Park, NW1* (pre-booking essential: ticket hotline 0845 6011597).

**The Great Christmas Pudding Race** Carrying decorated trays, around 10 six-person teams negotiate a series of obstacles in a spirited dash around the heart of Covent Garden to raise money for cancer charities. Dec 4, 11am. *The Piazza, WC2* (0141-611531).

**Calendar 2000** Drop-in workshops, at which children can make their own calendar for the new year, basing it on a favourite object in the V&A collection. Dec 5, 11am, 11pm, 3.30pm. *Gallery 28, Victoria & Albert Museum, Cromwell Rd, SW7* (0171-938 8500).

**Royal Horticultural Society Christmas Flower Show** Special

classes for cyclamen & azaleas at this indoor event for plant-lovers, plus some fine examples of trees & shrubs for winter gardens. Dec 14-15. Tues 11am-7pm; Wed 10am-5pm. *RHS Hall, Vincent Sq, SW1* (0171-316 4707).

**Christmas Festivities** The four-story house where Charles Dickens lived for two years is decorated just as it would have been in 1837. Uplifting displays are offered mince pies & a glass of Smoking Bishop—the author's favourite Christmas tipple. Dec 24-26, 10.30am-6pm. *Dickens House, 48 Doughty Street, WC1* (0171-485 2127).

**Peter Pan Cup Swimming Race** Hardy members of the Serpentine Swimming Club compete over a 100-yard course for the annual trophy, first awarded in 1864. Dec 25, 9am. *Hyde Park, W2*.

**Christmas Tudor Style** Delicous morsels of spit-roasted meat pervade the palace's cavernous Tudor kitchens, while the expert cooks create almond custard, apple moose & other period dishes. Outside, visitors can hear mince played on sackbut, shawm & bagpipe, join in a wild farandole, or laugh at the antics of the court jester. Dec 27-31, 9.30am-5pm. *Hampton Court Palace, East Molesey, Surrey* (0181-781 5300).

**Farewell to Christmas** Wrap up warmly for this traditional Twelfth Night event in the garden in front of the Geoffrey Museum's sumptuous 18th-century almshouses. The staff burn holly & other greenery that has been decorating the museum's period room-settings over the festive period, & offer visitors mulled wine & Twelfth Night cake.

Jan 6, 4pm. *Geoffrey Museum, Kingsland Rd, E2* (0171-739 9833).

**London International Boat Show** Top event of the year for all those thinking of buying a boat, or of fitting one out with the latest luxuries & state-of-the-art equipment. Plenty of displays, demonstrations & spectacular entertainment. Jan 6-16. Daily 10am-7pm (Jan 13 until 9.30pm; Jan 16 until 6pm).

*Earl Court, Warrick Rd, SW3* (ticket hotline 0121-767 4600).

**London Book Fair** Antiquarian & second-hand books on sale, plus maps & engraved & decorative prints. Jan 9, 10. Sun noon-6pm; Mon 11am-7pm. *Heard Russell, Russell Sq, WC1*; also a one-day fair, Jan 9, at the adjacent *Fleet & Bankside* Pathway. *Heard Russell, Russell Sq, WC1*; (01763 248 400).

COMPILED BY ANGELA BIRD & IAN JOHNS





## New Restaurants for Old

London's most venerable restaurants are ready to meet the millennium, says Charles Campion.

**I**n today's fizzing restaurant scene an establishment has only to survive for three or four years to be classed as a veteran. Saturday's gastro-fad blends seamlessly into Sunday's revamp. But there is a special kind of restaurant which has quietly gone about staying popular and making money, not for a year or two, nor even a decade, but for a generation or more. These are the kind of places our parents and even grandparents remember fondly, but such is the competitive nature of the industry that however old-fashioned they may sometimes seem they survive, and therefore must be getting something right. As the millennium approaches these old-timers must do what they have always done and adapt. Because in restaurants—as in nature—the choice is a stark one: evolve or die.

### NEW WAVE INDIAN

The **Veeraswamy** is London's oldest surviving Indian restaurant (*above right*). It was set up by Edward Palmer in 1927, after a very successful spell doing the catering at the Indian Government British Empire Exhibition at Wembley.



Originally he called this restaurant **Veerasawmy**, which was the name of his maternal grandmother, but when the new owner Sir William Seward got the menus reprinted in 1934 a careless printer transposed the second "a" and "w", and rather than re-print, he changed the restaurant name to match. After a successful period from the 1950s through to the 70s, **Veeraswamy's** began to flag, until it was bought

by Namita Panjabi, (the owner of **Chutney Mary**) and re-opened in a blaze of bright colours in late 1996. What's more, from serving run-of-the-mill Indian food, the menu changed completely to put it at the forefront of the new wave Indian restaurants, and it now serves delicious and authentic food including regional specialities from all over India. Look out for the street food delicacies like *ragda pattice*—spicy



potato cakes—and *achar gosht*—a lamb curry made with pickling spice. Also good are the fish dishes and, for the indecisive, the tasting menu.

### BELLE EPOQUE

**Kettners** was established in 1867 by Auguste Kettner who had been chef to Napoleon III. Originally it was a grand hotel decorated in belle époque baroque and it still looks the part. The private rooms upstairs were one of Edward VII's haunts. Kettners is now owned by Peter Boizot, the man who gave Pizza Express to Britain in the 1960s. Kettners is a whimsical blend of pizza house and champagne bar. The champagne comes in a frighteningly large range to suit most pockets. The pizzas are good here, particularly the Napoletana and the King Edward (which was named after the potato, rather than the royal visitor). The Kettners special hamburger is also highly rated by regulars. It's interesting to note that while the style of food at Kettners may have changed over the past 100 years, the importance of champagne has not.

### GOLDEN OLDIE

**Rules** (*right*) claims the title "London's oldest restaurant". It opened in 1798, and has a list of former patrons which reads like a dictionary of national biography: Dickens, Graham Greene, King Edward. As befits anywhere that has been open for 175 years, by the 1970s Rules was beginning to look dowdy. Fortunately the restaurant changed hands and now belongs to John Mayhew who has thrown himself whole-heartedly into the task of revitalising the place. A few years ago, David Chambers joined as executive chef and now Rules is back on form, flying the flag for British food—and game in particular. Rules goes into the new millennium with a great atmosphere that is all bustle and reminiscent of the best kind of brasserie. The traditional dishes are very good—roast pheasant, partridge and woodcock as available—and there is splendid venison from Scotland. Chambers has also added some more modernist dishes like a mussel, scallop and saffron soup, and an excellent carpaccio of venison. Die-hards will warm to the fact that this is one of the last restaurants in London to serve savouries at the end of the meal. Anyone for grilled mushrooms on walnut and raisin toast?

### A GRAND AFFAIR

Simpson's in the Strand (*right*) started as a "cigar, divan and coffee lounge" when Fountain Court was demolished, and by 1937 Thomas Burke was able to write glowingly about it in his book *Dinner Is Served*: "Chief of London's native restaurants is Simpson's in the Strand. At Simpson's, in case you don't know, the main features are the roasts—really roasted on the spit. The joints are wheeled from table to table, and carved before you to your order. But these are not all; Simpson's covers the whole English cookery book, and covers it in excellence."

If Burke were to visit today he wouldn't recognise the "general rooms" and "coffee lounge" he described on the first floor, as they have been turned into a new 120-seater restaurant called **Chequers** in honour of Simpson's long association with the game of chess. In a world of posh French rotisseries it is grand to see dishes on a menu that are traditionally spit roasted: guinea



fowl with spices; duck with white peaches; sirloin of beef. As Burke observed more than 60 years ago: "The productions of Simpson's chefs can stand confidently with the productions of the chefs of any country."

### DASH OF GLAMOUR

Burke also waxes eloquent about **Scotts** (*left and main picture*). He talks of how in the 1890s the "queer young things" called "mashers" or "johnnies", would entertain their favourite chorus girls to oyster and lobster suppers. After its move to Mayfair, and a glittering spell in the 1950s and 1960s, Scotts languished somewhat until 1996 when it received a £2 million refurbishment and re-opened with a dash of glamour. There are still oysters and lobsters, although the term "chorus girl" is not so frequently heard about the place. The menu makes good use of market-fresh fish but has evolved, so that now a baked British goat's cheese may come in a filo pastry basket, and a hand-picked Cornish crab with herb mayonnaise. Of the main courses, grilled monkfish comes with bubble and squeak and bacon; and whole roast sea bream with garlic roast potatoes and shrimps. For unrepentant carnivores there's a serious chargrilled rib-eye steak and chips.

### SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

It is often forgotten that in the 1960s, Fanny and Johnny Craddock used to co-operate under the pen name "Bon Viveur" and write about London restaurants for the *Daily Telegraph* newspaper. On the subject of **Sheekey's** (established in 1896, it was already an old-timer in their day) they wrote: "Once you have passed the counter as you enter Sheekey's small restaurant, the first thing to catch your eye is a framed be-whiskered portrait of the founder who surveys the busy little scene with some dignity. By this time a very remarkable woman will have had sufficient time to observe you, record your features, and give you a welcome." Mrs Giles is no longer the meeter and greeter here, and things had declined a good deal by 1998 when Sheekey's was taken over and revitalised by the owners of Le Caprice and the Ivy. The restaurant re-emerged as J. Sheekey with a network of small rooms selling fine fish dishes, including everything from jellied eels to cuttlefish with creamed brandade—which would certainly have puzzled Mrs Giles!

### GAZETEER

Rules, 35 Maiden Lane, WC2 (0207 836 5314) from £42.

Chequers, Simpson's-in-the-Strand, 100 Strand WC2 (0207 420 6503) £35-£55.

Scotts Restaurant, 20 Mount Street W1 (0207 629 5248) £40-£60.

Kettners, 29 Romilly Street, W1 (0207 734 6112) £20-£45.

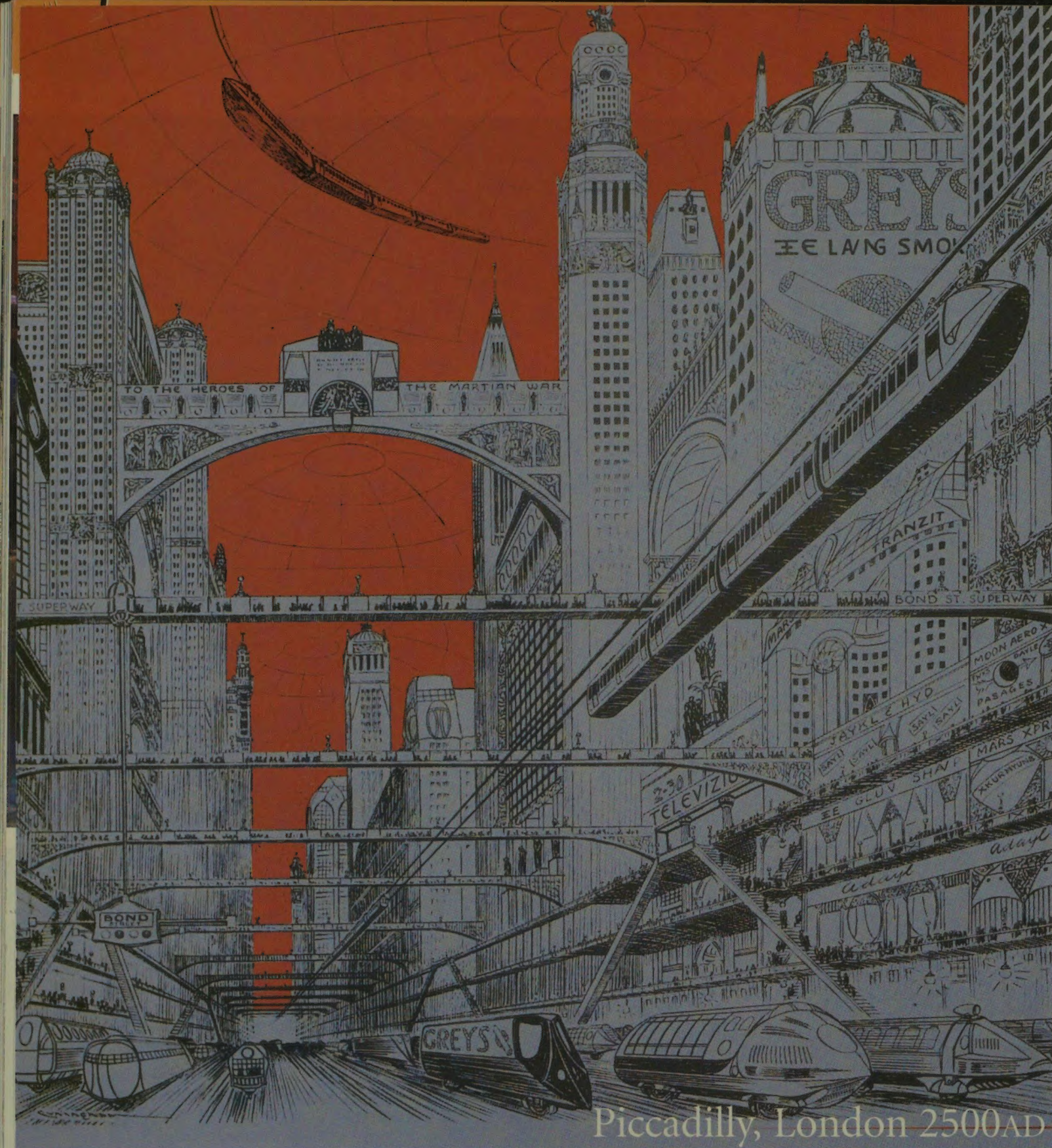
Veeraswamy, Victory House, 101 Regent Street, W1 (0207 734 1401) £25-£50.

J. Sheekey's, 28-32 St Martin's Court, WC2 (0207 240 2565) £25-£50.

Prices given represent the approximate cost of dinner for two people including house wine.

**CHARLES CAMPION** is a *Glenfiddich Restaurant Writer of the Year* award winner and writes about food and restaurants for *ES*—the magazine of the London Evening Standard.





Piccadilly, London 2500AD

# The Millennial Metropolis?

*Roofed-in under non-conductive mica glass...moving pathways... rubber roadways avenued into 50, 100, 150 and 200 miles per hour... suspended mono railways...motors driven by atomic energy... phonetic spelling...wireless television...lighted by captured solar rays... excursions to Mars. Cigarette advertisement, January, 1921.*

This futuristic vision of the heart of London's West End was the first in a series of advertisements from *The Illustrated London News Picture Library* that appeared throughout 1921, promoting a brand of cigarettes. Although there are a further 500 years to go before we can assess the accuracy of the artist's vision, clearly some of his ideas—such as the wireless television—

are already with us. Others, such as the tram-like trains zooming through car-less streets, could form part of the current government's manifesto for improved inner-city transport. While the glass bubble ceiling bears an uncanny resemblance to Sir Richard Rogers' rejected scheme for London's South Bank.

So much for the future: looking back, we can see how strongly the image of the American city was already, at the beginning of the 1920s, dominating world consciousness. In his imposition of Manhattan on central London, the artist was anticipating the spread of American culture that has accelerated in all aspects of life over the intervening 80 years.





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